PRIVATE EYE

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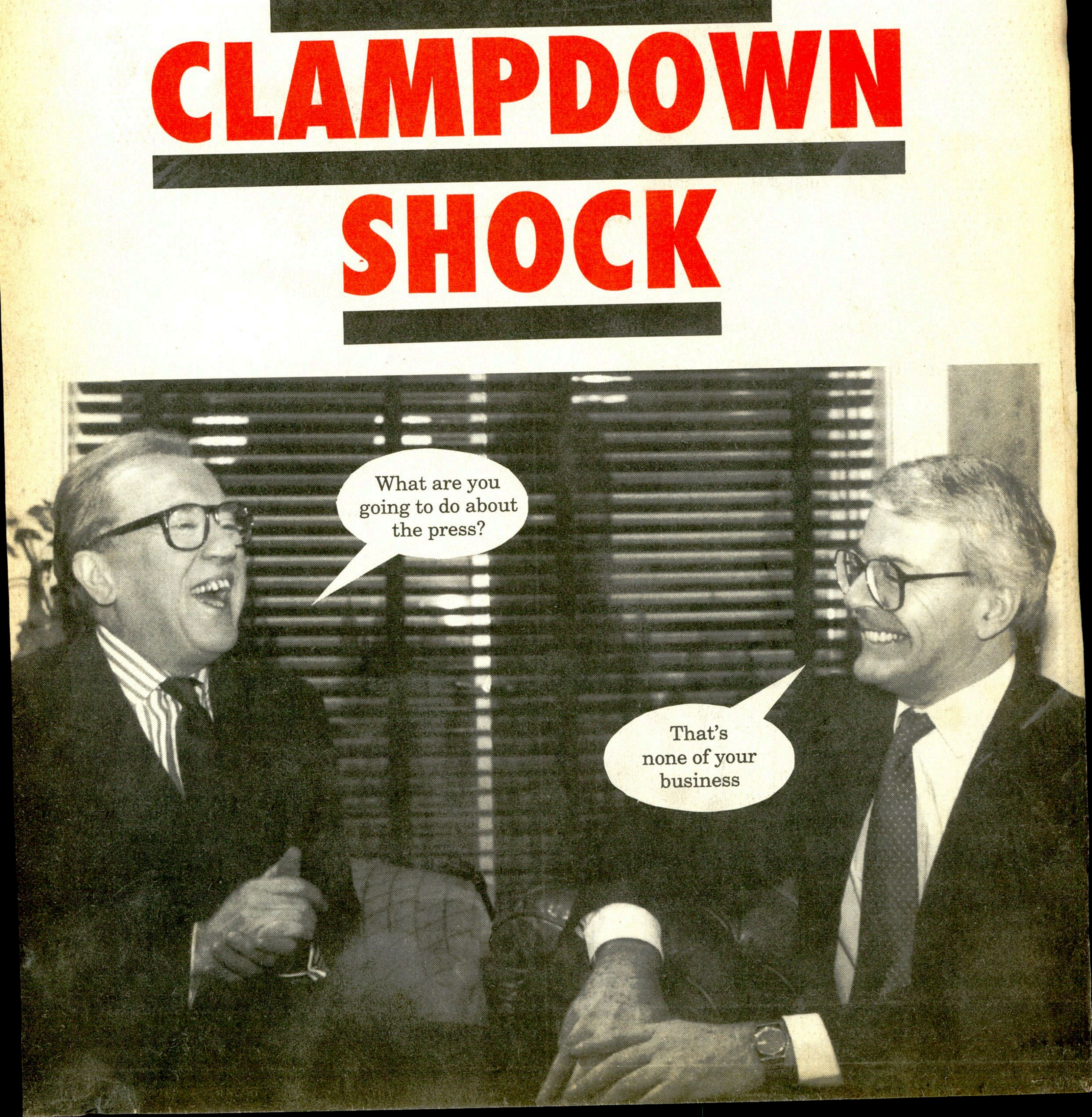
Friday
15 Jan. '93

PRIVACY CLAMPDOWN SHOCK



For a limited period, we're offering a Young Persons Railcard to people who are older. (Sorry Gary, not that much older.)

C'mon, c'mon all you 24 and 25 year olds. From 11th January until 31st March, you (as well as 16-23 year olds) can get a Young Persons Railcard. For only £16, you'll save a third on most rail fares for a whole year. Pick up a leaflet at your local BR station or Rail Appointed Travel Agent for full details. Be quick. It would be a crying shame to miss out.

YOUNG PERSONS RAILCARD

Gnome

THE enormous success of Gnome Morning Television (GMTV) has inevitably attracted criticism from envious media commentators.

The programme's detractors have accused GMTV of "going tabloid" and have paid particular attention to the selection of female presenters. Hurtful articles have appeared in the press suggesting that meteorological correspondent Jackie Bimbo, health expert Karen Raunch and political editor Tracy Starbird were chosen for their looks rather than their track records in journalism. Some papers have even claimed that the main presenter, Sarah Solemn, has been told to "smile and show off her legs" during more serious items.

The source of this campaign of disinformation is my Director of Programming at GMTV, Miss Jilly Sleaze, who is alleged to have told reporters "I only pick presenters with f***ability".

I have, of course, questioned Ms Sleeze about this coarse, sexist and unpleasant remark and I believe her when she says that she was misquoted.

For the record, what she actually said was "I only pick presenters with f*** all ability".

This is a very different matter.

E. Strobes
pp Lord Gnome
GMTV
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Cheapside
London

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COLOUR SECTION

IT WOULD be wrong to confuse the two men who masterminded the campaign of dirty tricks for British Airways against Virgin. They are:

● **David Burnside** (see last *Eye*), who is a former executive member of Vanguard, the ultra-right Protestant organisation set up by William Craig when he broke from the Ulster Unionists in the mid 1970s.

Burnside was quoted in *The Ulster Defender* — journal of the now banned Ulster Defence Association — of August 1975 as saying: "If Ulster is to be defended against Communism then either the present authorities must fulfil their constitutional role of maintaining order and defending the law — or the people will have to take steps to defend themselves". Burnside is a close friend and adviser of Mirror Group Newspapers' chief executive David Montgomery, which could prove useful if Burnside days with BA were ever to come to an end.)

● **Ian Johnson**, a "security consultant" who ran the hunt for a mole inside British Airways and spent tens of thousands of pounds of good BA money trying to track down a suspect who almost certainly didn't exist.

Johnson also has experience in Northern Ireland — he went there when an intelligence officer for the British army. Some say he rose to the rank of captain, but other *Eye* sources say he never made it above staff sergeant. Despite the letter in *Eye* 808 from DNV Churton, managing director of Control Risks, a "specialist management consultancy", Johnson's firm *did* work for Control Risks, which employed Peter Goss, a former army intelligence chief in Northern Ireland; and Johnson's employment at British Airways resulted from his connection with Control Risks.

As the *Eye* pointed out in the last issue, the mystery of how two such strangely similar people should come to have been employed or retained by British Airways is only really understood by appreciating the close contact between Lord King, chairman of British Airways, Margaret Thatcher, her former PPS Ian Gow and MI5.

BRITISH RAIL chairman Sir Bob Reid has committed an unforgivable sin. He has warned the government that rail privatisation (or franchise mania, to give the correct medical term now used by disillusioned Whitehall officials) will cost the treasury a lot more than the present integrated network.

The BR policy unit, which has produced this fateful information, has a good reputation. Its head for four years was none other than ambitious under-secretary Philip Wood, who then returned to the transport department and became the reluctant author of the privatisation white paper.

The facts — that franchising won't work and will lead to more accidents (see *Eyes passim* and all national press later) — are as nothing compared with the finding that the treasury will have to fork out a lot more money to keep it afloat.

This will result from two factors: the increased staff needed by the five quangoes that will replace BR; and the higher return required by private operators, which will mean higher subsidies than BR has ever had. Political humankind cannot bear so much reality and, judging by recent briefings from John "Brunel" MacGregor, Sir Bob's days as BR chairman are numbered.

It is ironic that this should happen to such a right-wing industrialist — but Reid is in good company. That even more right-wing industrialist and ex-property developer, Lord Suit, is now in the same "anti" lobby with milords Ridley and Whitelaw, both of whom know a lot more about chuff-chuffs than Mr MacGregor.

EVER SINCE John Major's gaffe in not appointing a woman to his first cabinet, he and his advisers have been looking for good public relations opportunities to fashion his image as a champion of women's rights.

The appointment of Valerie Strachan as the new head of customs and excise caught the imagination of several newspapers, all of whom coincidentally pointed out that Strachan's was one of three recent appointments of women to top posts (Barbara Mills was recently named as director of public prosecutions and Stella Rimington as head of MI5.)

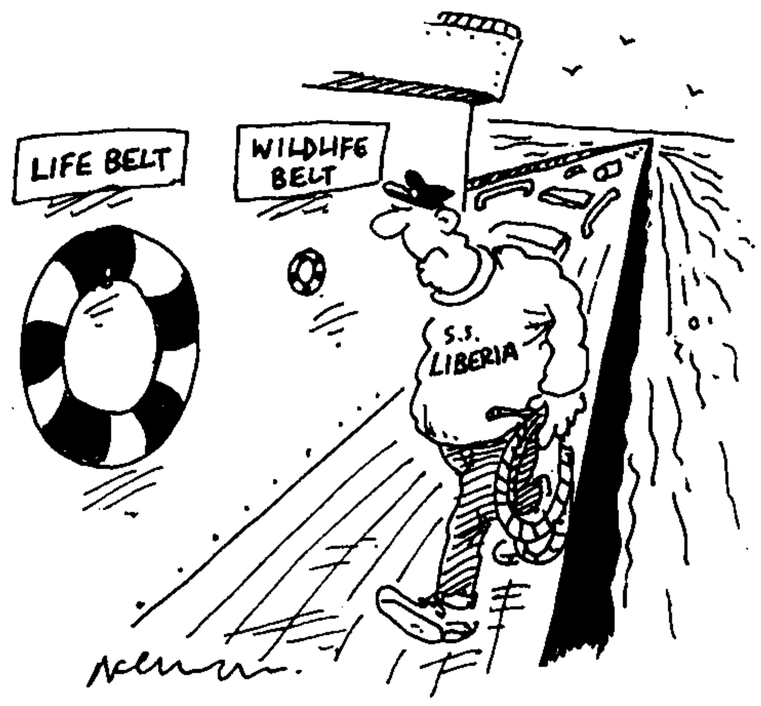
None of the papers was tactless enough to refer either to the courageous decision of Mrs Mills to prosecute none of the liars, cheats and forgers in the West Midlands serious crimes squad; nor to the courageous decision of customs, in which Valerie Strachan had a hand, to prosecute makers of fruit juice machinery who want to sell it to Iraq, while not prosecuting the makers of Saddam Hussein's supergun; nor to the astonishing increase in IRA activity in London ever since Rimington's MI5 took over responsibility for ridding the country of terrorism.

MUCH INTEREST followed the *Eye*'s revelations of the government's "generosity" in buying back repossessed houses — mainly from its own departments — so that taxpayers' money ends up in the hands of the chancellor once more.

Another development which is worrying housing associations is the fashion for high rents being set by many top housing associations management committees. At Circle 33, one of the biggest housing associations, the tenants' representatives have just submitted proposals for rent increases at the rate of inflation, but the management committee is expected to insist on much higher rises.

One reason for this may be the need to service loans from building societies and other lenders. The chairman of the management committee and of Circle 33 is a highly-qualified housing expert called Mark Boleat, who also knows all about building societies and mortgage lenders since he is director-general of both the organisations which represent them.

If anyone who lives in a Circle 33 house wants to complain about the management of the housing association, they can do so to the government body which funds and supervises housing associations — the Housing Corporation, on the board of which sits Mark Boleat.



STREET of SHAME

MONDAY'S *Daily Mirror* carried a passionate editorial denouncing the Calcutt report. "The freedom of the press," it thundered, "is no more and no less — and must never be more or less — than the inalienable right of every citizen to speak his mind in public without fear of penalty, prosecution or persecution."

A week earlier a sub-editor on the *Sunday Mirror*, Tim Minogue, exercised that inalienable right by writing a letter to *UK Press Gazette* objecting to a claim that the *Mirror* hacks sacked recently were all Trotskyists and ruffians. The consequences were dramatic: when Minogue arrived for work last Saturday, he was forcibly escorted from the building and told that he would be sacked unless he immediately signed a "gagging order" promising not to write or speak about the *Mirror* in public ever again.

Perhaps, when pontificating about the rights of "every citizen" in future, the *Mirror* should make it clear that it does not include its own employees in that category.

FORMER *Sunday Times* hack Simon Freeman was so outraged by the wealth of overpaid journalists at the *Daily Mirror* he wrote a long article about them in the *Sunday Telegraph*.

So enormously fat was his fee for the piece that Freeman then wrote almost exactly the same indignant article for the *Sunday Telegraph*'s main competitor, the *Observer*, which published it and paid him an even fatter fee.

Simon Freeman has now changed his name by deed poll to Simon Feeman.

WHILE the *Mail on Sunday* boasts noisily about its buoyant circulation, staff morale is sagging.

It is months since the paper had a good story, and the only reason people keep buying it is that the competition — la Bollard's *Sunday Express* — is even worse.

Things have now become so bad that even senior executives at the *MoS* seem reluctant to be publicly associated with it. Consider the two main articles in the opinion section on 3 January — a long, optimistic new year *tour d'horizon* by Charles Cowley, and a piece by Susan Brown praising Princess Diana's good sense.

Who are these two hitherto unknown pundits? "Charles Cowley" is the pseudonym of Sir David English, the *Mail*'s editor-in-chief; and "Susan Brown" is Sue Reid, the assistant editor of the *Mail on Sunday*.

There is no obvious reason for English and Reid to hide behind these aliases. What, one wonders, are they ashamed of?

THE *Sunset Times* made a great song and dance last year about its refusal to allow potential conflicts of interest in its book pages — unlike other papers, which it implied were in the grip of a score-settling, log-rolling "literary mafia".

Last weekend the selfsame *Sunset Times* published a long, dismissive review by Lucy Hughes-Hallett of *Sex, Art and American Culture*, the latest offering from American anti-feminist Camille Paglia, — "a scrappy book", Hughes-Hallett opined, "which for its author's reputation's sake should never have been published".

Oddly, the newspaper neglected to mention that Paglia's book includes an entire chapter attacking Lucy Hughes-Hallett.

INCREASINGLY erratic *Sun* editor Kelvin Mackenzie had a disastrous start to 1993, scoring a glorious and expensive own goal with his attempt to publish the sensational "Zimmergate" revelations about the *Daily Mirror*'s veteran agony aunt, Marje Proops.

Serial rights in la Proops's biography, which details her 50-year sham marriage, had naturally been bought by her employers at the *Daily Mirror*. But Macca, whose own 25-year marriage has also gone bust recently, was so obsessed with the Proops affair that he got bimbo hackette Antonella Lazzeri to prepare a "spoiler" to be serialised in the *Sun* at the same time as the *Mirror*'s genuine article.

The story was scheduled for the *Sun*'s issue of 31 December, and was to be promoted by a blizzard of TV commercials the previous evening. But there was a mix-up over dates. Thus *Daily Mirror* hacks idly gazing at the office TV on the evening of 29 December were horrified to see a commercial promising "the full amazing story" of Marje Proops's love-life — "in the *Sun*, tomorrow". They hastily scrambled to bring forward their own "exclusive" on Marje, and duly managed to get it ready in time for their first edition. Imagine their astonishment, however, when the first edition of the *Sun* arrived at Holborn Circus... and there was no sign of a Marje Proops story.

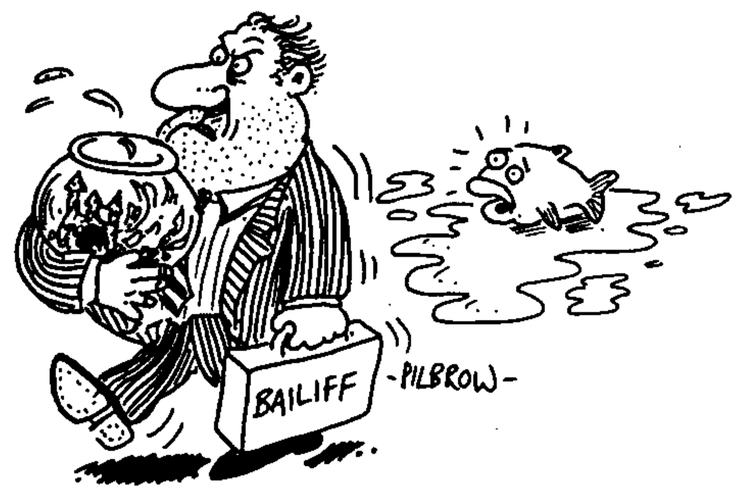
The consternation at the *Mirror* was as nothing compared to that at the *Sun*, where no one had noticed that the TV adverts were running 24 hours early until it was drawn to their attention by a phone call from a puzzled hack at *Today*. Up against the clock, Kelvin's finest were only able to get their "spoiler" into the last edition: the vast majority of *Sun* readers were thus doomed not to see a word of the story which the Digger was paying so much to promote on telly, but could read all about it in the *Mirror*.

A furious buck-passing row ensued. Arc Advertising, the *Sun*'s agency, insisted that it had sent a memo to Wapping clearly stating that the commercial would run on the night of 29 December. But amid the confusion of a boozy Christmas and New Year season, no one at the paper was able to add up the dates correctly. The finger of blame is now being pointed squarely at the *Sun*'s dismal promotions department — who stand accused of not telling editorial executives what they should have known already.

More a case of Oops than Proops, as Kelvin might have put it had the boot been on the other foot.

MEANWHILE, not content with her job at the *Daily Mirror*, the 81-year-old Marje has extended her empire to the *Sunday Mirror*, ousting that paper's agony aunt Virginia Ironside, who is roughly half her age. In her valedictory column last weekend, Ironside graciously declined to mention that she had been sacked to make way for an older woman.

The new managers at the Mirror Group — led by gormless Ulsterman David "Rommel" Montgomery — think that an extra weekly column by Marje makes economic sense. It seems unlikely. The "agony" phone lines which Ironside runs have generated about £30,000 a year for the *Mirror*. Marje, perhaps because of her quavering larynx, refuses to run an advice service over the phone. The paper is thus out of pocket already.



It is also worth noting that Marje requires 11 staff to deal with her correspondence at the *Daily Mirror*, whereas Ironside — who ran a similar operation — managed with just one secretary. Yet the *Daily Mirror* does not get much more mail than its Sunday sister. Several profiles of Marje in the past fortnight have repeated the claim that she receives 25,000 letters a year. This is balderdash. Veterans of the *Mirror*'s reader services department, which deals with Marje's postbag, say that she averages between 120 and 150 letters a week — ie, about seven thousand letters a year, less than one third of the official figure. "Marje often got fewer letters than Virginia," one *Mirror* insider said last week.

THERE IS jubilation at the *Grauniad* over the imminent departure of philistine arts editor Jocelyn "Miss" Targett, who has been hired to run the Culture, Books, Style and Travel sections of the *Sunset Times*.

However, the rejoicing is not quite universal. Features editor Alan Rusbridger, to whose patronage Targett owed his advancement at the *Grauniad*, is understandably peeved at seeing his protegé jump ship so soon. "He'll come crawling back here in six months' time," he is predicting.

Rusbridger will be even more aggrieved when he learns that Targett has been confiding to friends his intention of taking many of the *Grauniad*'s leading contributors with him. Reviewers whom Targett hopes to lure to Wapping include Michael Billington (theatre), James Wood (chief literary critic), Deyan Sudjic (architecture) and the former art critic, Waldemar Januszczak.

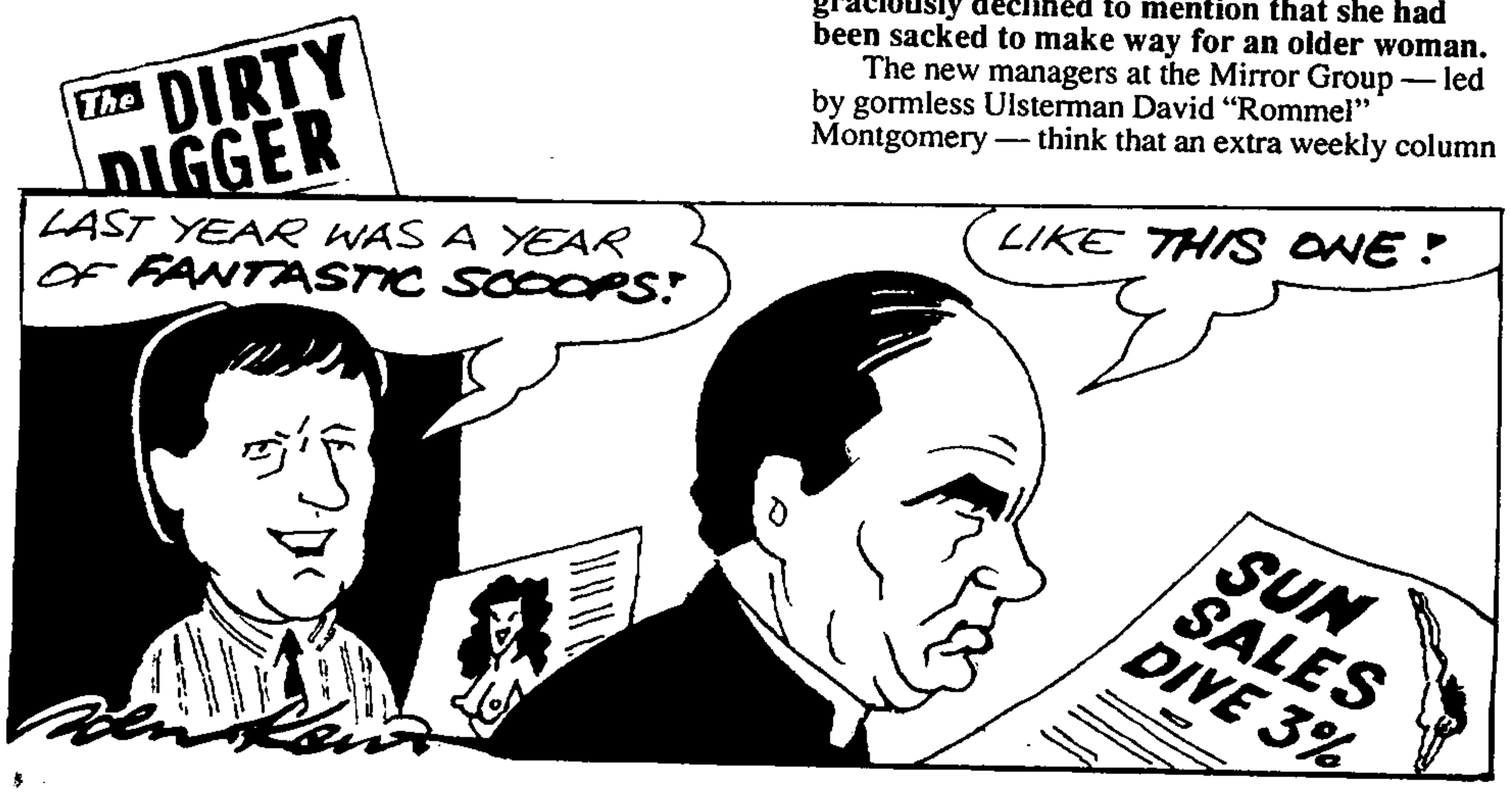
Still, there are some *Grauniad* writers on Targett's list whose departure will not be mourned by anyone. They include snub-nosed, right-wing "controversialist" Toby Young (whom Targett wants to review videos) and drivelling egomaniac Paul Morley (whose brief at the *Sunset Times* will be to "deconstruct" TV commercials).

To make room for all these hacks, of course, "Miss" Targett will have to create some vacancies. If, for example, he goes ahead with his wheeze of employing Gilbert Adair as the *ST*'s film critic, he will presumably have to get rid of the present incumbent, Iain Johnstone. This may land him in trouble with his new employer; for, as "Miss" Targett may not know, Andrew "Brillo Pad" is a close friend of Johnstone — he is, indeed, the godfather of Johnstone's daughter.

There could be further embarrassment if Targett proceeds with his idea of hiring playwright Arnold Wesker to review TV drama. The *Sunday Times* has long had acrimonious relations with Wesker. Some years ago he was allowed to spend a few weeks in the paper's office "researching" a play, but the book he then wrote about his experience, *Journey Into Journalism*, was so defamatory the *ST* threatened a blizzard of libel writs if he ever dared publish it. Still, perhaps all is now forgiven and forgotten. For Targett's sake, we must hope so.

HOW DID the *Grauniad* manage to demote to a lowly part of an inside page its extraordinary scoop about GPT, the telephone subsidiary of GEC, negotiating with the Iraqis to sell that country a whole telephone system plainly in breach of current sanctions against Saddam?

The answer appears to be Jonathan Fenby, the *Grauniad*'s deputy editor, who learnt at the *Independent* that if you get hold of an exclusive story which might upset too many important people, it's better not to make too much of a fuss about it.



O·B·N

Like Murdoch, 60 years later, Camrose sailed through looming financial and media disasters at the start of the 1930s with apparently total serenity and reliance on his own editing and business skill. And for the same reasons: his energy and ability were phenomenal, his lenders and his editors trusted him, and he never broke his word.

ANDREW KNIGHT,
Sunday Times

Put them both in the 15th century and she could be Joan of Arc, leading armies into battle, and he could be Archbishop Henry Chichele, founding All Souls College, Oxford, to pray for the souls of those killed at Agincourt. She is the leader; he is the priest.

WILLIAM REES-MOGG (on Charles and Diana)
Independent

Ivana [Trump] has an inimitable flair for splendour, yet she is a very down-to-earth woman who has won a lot of admiration around the world.

Hello!

Submitted by L. Gilbert, Linda McGowan.

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

"Typical British Airways. The case got lost"

OUR REPORT in the last *Eye* about *News of the Screws* managing editor Stuart Kuttner paying £20,000 to his old chum Nick "Ohio" Davies for a pisspoor royal story was inaccurate in one respect — it suggested the story concerned was one about Prince Charles's love for Camilla Parker-Bowles, which appeared under the by-lines of Elizabeth Grimsditch (alias Fiona MacDonald-Hull and Chris Boffey).

In fact the tendentious tale concerned Fergie and plans for an alleged £4 million divorce settlement. An irate MacDonald-Hull phoned the *Eye* to point out that it was this story, and not her story about Camilla, that the paper's royal correspondent and news editor had scorned. "We've all spent years trying to keep Stuart Kuttner's awful drivel out of the paper," she added.

SUNDAY EXPRESS editor Eve Pollard, alias Bollard, alias Lady Lloyd, alias Lady "Rhino Arse", was furious when the *Eye* revealed at the beginning of December that sales of her paper in early November were down to 1,680,000.

This, despite massive promotion and a tabloid relaunch, was only 12,000 above the sales figure just before she took over. Since then, however, the figures have become even more parlous; and we reported that the 22 November edition had dipped to 1,647,000. The *Sunday Express* has now told the media section of the *Evening Standard* that its sales rose 29,000 to 1,641,000 on 27 December, with a further 25,000 rise on 3 January. This means that on 3 January its sales were 1,666,000 (2,000 less than just before Bollard took over) and that on 20 December its sales were 1,612,000.

HACKWATCH No 37: Marje Proops

FOR THE past fortnight the tabloids have been full to bursting with the love life of Marje Proops, "the World's Greatest Advice Columnist".

Thanks to her authorised biography, *Marje: The Guilt and the Gingerbread*, we now know that for most of her 52-year marriage she refused to have sex with her husband, Sidney "Proopsie" Proops, who had "this great big ugly penis which terrified the life out of me... It was a tremendous intrusion"; and that for 20 years she conducted a passionate affair with the *Daily Mirror*'s lawyer, Phillip Levy, without ever telling Proopsie.

Marje sees nothing wrong with her conduct. But how would she react if anyone else behaved like that? It is easy enough to find out, since many of the letters sent to Marje at the *Mirror* are from readers who are trapped in similarly dull marriages, are sexually uninterested in their spouses, or are wondering whether to have an affair. Here is what she tells them:

4 August: A reply to a man whose wife holds back from him in bed. "Your wife's resistance is due to her body's message to the invader. Your penis is the invader she must resist," Marje explains. Oddly, however, she does not suggest that the solution is for the wife to have an affair with a *Mirror* lawyer.

"Talking about the problems will help you, but just in case words aren't enough I'll send you a couple of leaflets — one on impotence and one on premature ejaculation. I think they will encourage you both to try again."

15 September: An appeal from a Proopsie-like man whose wife "won't let me near her, let alone touch her. As for sex, she says I can forget it". Marje is unsympathetic. She tells him that he must be bad in bed, or ugly. "There are endless possibilities, but the plain fact is that she's gone off you."

22 September: Another Proopsie-type problem, albeit with the sexes reversed: "Dear Marje... My son-in-law came home a few weeks ago and confessed he'd been having an affair with a girl in his office. That was bad enough, but when he told my daughter it had started three weeks after they married and lasted until three months ago, she threw him out... What can I do to patch things up for them?" Do nothing, Marje replies sternly. "Your daughter has been betrayed consistently over years... I hope she won't relent, for there can be life after divorce and it would be great for her to find a man who would value her and be faithful."

10 November: A woman whose husband can't satisfy her sexually wonders if she should have an affair with another man. "I wouldn't call this potty idea a solution," Marje rebukes her. "It seems more like a death sentence to me... Abandon it and take, instead, some practical steps to sort out the sexual problems you have."

Marje is equally severe with an unhappily married man who tells her that he has started eyeing up other women. "Bonking other women will simply hasten the end of your dream of family life," she warns him. "The pair of you can, given the will and a bit of common sense, revive that dream."

17 November: "I don't know how much longer I can go on," writes a woman whose husband has a mistress. Marje replies that this is a common problem: "Countless lying husbands are having a bit of the other, successfully deceiving their unsuspecting wives... I think you should call a meeting with your spouse, with a simple her or me agenda... Tell him you are insecure and humiliated because of his other relationship. You have a reasonable chance, I think, of winning".

1 December: A woman complains that her husband demands sex too often. Marje replies that she has a simple choice: "You can either give in or pack it [the marriage] in." The possibility of a Proopsie-style *mariage blanc* is not mentioned.

15 December: A married man who has fallen in love with his social worker asks Marje's "permission" to have an affair. "You've got a liberty," Marje snaps. "You are, indeed, as emotionally immature as a teenager except that teenagers have an excuse for their irrational feelings and you are old enough to know better... It's well known that patients often imagine they are in love with doctors, nurses, carers — and even advisers like me, believe it or not." She orders him to stick with his wife.

22 December: A bored wife, aged 47, has started having sexual fantasies about a 24-year-old man she knows. Should she have an affair? Marje dismisses the idea. "Do you honestly want to put at risk a marriage that may not be much fun, but is certainly secure? I doubt if you do. The answer, I think, is to carry on fantasising. Pretend it's that boy heaving away and it should encourage you to be a bit more adventurous in bed with your husband. And you could try encouraging him to be, too." On the same page, Marje gives rather different advice to a man who fears that his wife is having an affair. "The truth you must face, I'm afraid, is that the woman you married needs more than one man," Marje briskly counsels.

5 January: No room for anyone else's problems this week. Instead, after a week in which her own life has been minutely scrutinised, the Dear Marje column is given over to a gushing tribute to her son, Robert, for providing "the love that will see me through my own agony". Those who criticise her for cheating on her husband are, she adds, "ignorant and prejudiced people".

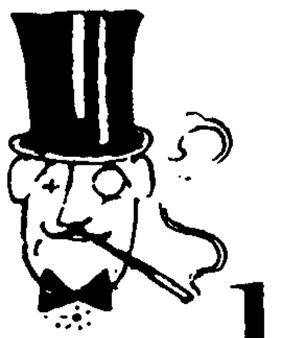
Or might they just be people who think that an agony aunt shouldn't criticise her readers' extra-marital affairs if she can't manage without a bit on the side herself?

WHETHER the *MoS* can sustain its market dominance now readers have seen the relaunched and completely unreadable *YOU* magazine is open to question.

Aussie editor Dee Nolan (who received an award for her editorship of *Metropolitan Home* after it had folded) has spent pots of Lord Rothermere's money paying off sacked employees of the mag (picture editor Harvey Mann, a veteran *Mail* employee, received £300,000) and has produced a new *YOU* which is essentially a re-run of *Metropolitan Home*.

The Monday morning after the relaunch saw a record-breaking 200 complaints to the Associated Newspapers switchboard about the wimpish format, and commissioning editors have been desperately ringing round old contributors who had been pensioned off asking them to provide some butch copy.

Nolan's approach to every subject is influenced by her obsession with wallpaper and soft furnishings. She recently told freelance hack and battered husband David Thomas that she didn't enjoy Woody Allen films, all except one — *Interiors*. *Interiors* is of course notorious for being Allen's least funny and most earnest, an exercise in Bergmanesque angst in which the interior sets are a metaphor for the introspective concerns of the characters. "The decor was *so* interesting," she explained.



Grovel

I HEAR a touching detail of the romantic moment when *Sun* editor Kelvin Mackenzie first encountered *Sunday Times* secretary Joanna Duckworth at a Wapping swimming baths during their luncheon break.

Apparently Miss Duckworth's swimming costume had a small hole in it (I know not where); and later that afternoon Kelvin instructed a messenger to deliver a gift to her: a needle and thread (no jokes about pricks, please).

Sadly any romance between the two is bound to be shortlived as disturbing evidence has come my way concerning McKenzie's sanity. Shown a photograph of ITV daytime TV presenter Richard Madeley (of *Richard and Judy Show* infamy), McKenzie pronounced him to be a smooth bastard and confessed that if he could choose to come back as someobody else in another life it would be as Madeley.

● *IT SEEMS to be the season for romance among national newspaper editors.*

Daily Torygraph editor Max "Hitler" Hastings, who like McKenzie separated from his wife last year, has been pursuing Lady Jane Roxburghe, a sister of the Duke of Westminster and former wife of the Duke of Roxburghe.

Hastings has always had a renowned craving for aristocratic sport.

A WHIFF of conspiracy and disinformation hangs over literary London, all a-dither over who will pen the new biograpy of overrated espionage writer John Le Carré.

Several publishers received a letter from literary agent "Sir" Giles Gordon last month, inviting them to bid for a biography currently being written by Graham Lord.

Some might have been reluctant to make an offer, knowing that there was already a Le Carré biography on the way from *Fatherland* author Robert Harris. But Gordon's letter set their minds at rest. "For some time," he wrote, "Graham had decided that the major literary biography which he would like to write was John Le Carré, and thus he was disappointed to learn that another writer had embarked on the project. This writer has now abandoned the project and Graham is going to do it."

This was, to say the least, disingenuous. Harris had not abandoned his book. Nor had he handed it over to his rival, as the last sentence seemed to imply. Indeed, Harris spoke about his Le Carré book when Graham Lord interviewed him for the *Sunday Express* last year, so Lord must have known what the true position was. Still, the misrepresentation seems to have done the trick: Lord's book has now been snapped up by Little Brown.

His outline does not betray much enthusiasm for Le Carré's work. "I admire some of his books," Lord writes, "but find several of them grossly over-written and a touch pretentious." As befits the biographer of Jeffrey Bernard, Lord appears far more interested in proving that his subject is "a ferocious drinker" and a randy old goat.

"A Le Carré biography and I were made for each other," he boasts. The "many secrets" he promises to expose include "Le Carré's weird, three-in-a-bed, adulterous, semi-homosexual relationship with author James Kennaway and his wife Susan". This may be titillating stuff, but it is hardly "secret": Susan Kennaway wrote a book about the affair, *The Kennaway Papers*, more than a decade ago.

The outline ends with becoming modesty: "My first biography, *Just The One: The Wives and Times of Jeffrey Bernard*, published in November 1992, unearthed so many secrets and surprises about its subject that it probably received more media coverage than any other book published in Britain in 1992 except Madonna's *Sex* and Neil Lyndon's *No More Sex War*." Presumably he has never heard of *Diana: Her True Story*.

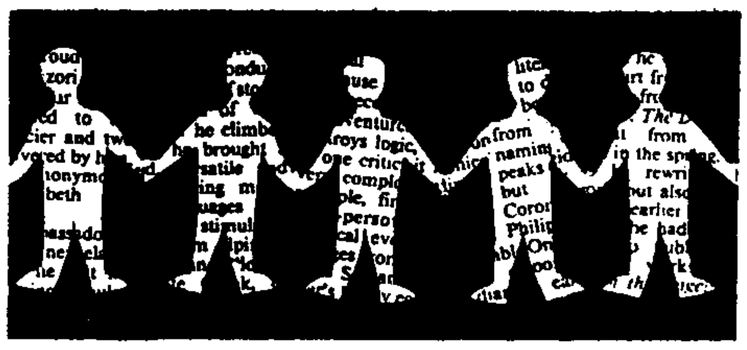
An Ascot frock fit for a queen, or Lady Bollard, anyway. Competition entry designed by Phil Kirkley

● *IN THE DAYS before he died, Rudolf Nureyev refused to see even close friends, such as oneself; so one was more than suprised to read an interview with him in the Daily Express purporting to have been given at his villa on St Barts in the West Indies.*

The interview was filed on the day Nureyev died, sent by the paper's former news editor, Mike Parry, from his new lair in New York. He just happened to have it knocking around, he explained to sceptical foreign desk colleagues, who wondered why on earth he hadn't filed it as soon as he had got it.

According to Parry's copy, Nureyev was in a wistful, confessional mood, and said, among other things: "I always suspected there would be a price to pay for stealing such a lovely life."

Pressed further by the foreign desk, Parry finally admitted that no, he had not actually been to the villa himself but had obtained the quotes from a close friend of Nureyev's. Of course, he did, of course.



Missing Links

IN ITS "Evenings Out" feature every Saturday, the *Times* asks prominent figures to recommend current plays, exhibitions, films etc, and on 2 January it was the turn of Baroness Blackstone, Master of Birkbeck College.

Her choices were the Edvard Munch show at the National Gallery, *The Tales of Beatrix Potter* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, and the new production of *Alcina*, also at the Royal Opera House.

All good publicity for Covent Garden. What la Blackstone neglected to mention, however, was that she is a director of the Royal Opera House.

Pip Pip!

Pseuds Corner

Cara, born on August 12, is the third daughter of Charles and Pandora Delevingne. Cara will experience her first white Christmas at Gstaad. Flying out with her will be a personalised toy chest and a framed picture name.

Mail on Sunday

I've started calling everyone "Drude", a cross between "Dude" and "Druid". People want to be New Age, but they don't want the crap side of it.

I'm doing this meditation album, and so I've been commissioning meditations. I said to some friends: "Would you write me a meditation? All it's got to be is very low key, with a beat of some kind and more than 15 minutes long." It will be better than a lot of this wishy washy New Age stuff. The album's going to be called *Rite*. It's got a picture of Silbury on the front and all the stuff I'm into, but its Drude music, a bit more of an urban meditation.

JULIAN COPE
Fortean Times

But, essentially, ***Dream of Fair to Middling Women*** *portrays the artist as a young terrier concerned to forage a lower, more strictly modulated register of fine lines for himself, rather than keep our ears cocked to his master's inemulably plurabelle arcanstrations.*

MICHAEL HOROVITZ
Sunday Times

"I was very lucky in my school. The library was full of authors like Kotzebuhe." This was the Xavierian College in Manchester. The fierce brothers taught him Latin, but he also taught himself Greek. He found language *fun*. "We used to translate 'I say tomato, you say tomay-to' into Latin. *Dico ego pomum, dicis tu phonum*."

ANTHONY BURGESS
The Times

Charles Jencks' interest lies in symbolic architecture: "The idea is to make everything relate to each other", and so it does — sofas, light fixtures, even spoons. As you move through the house the seasons change, from entering into the winter room (a hall and sitting area) you pass into spring, summer, Indian summer (the kitchen) and back to winter, the cycle completed...

...For the green carpeted floor read grass, for the curved ceiling, painted blue, read sky. From a corner of ceiling above an interior window comes a

sculpted sunburst chasing rain clouds in purple and grey. The light fixtures are disguised as planets. Through the interior window can be glimpsed the "solar stair".

...The cosmos aside, he intended the library as a "London village" of books. "If people can have individual houses why can't books?" he says. "I was criticising the idea of the modern bookcase." So the books are categorised, starting with Greek and ending with late modern and housed in "bookhouses" built in a style appropriate to their contents. There are two free-standing "skyscrapers", actually filing cabinets for slides. One is marked with a T (for traditional architectural slides) and bears a face, that of traditional man, on its "head", the other with an M (modern slides) and the face of modern woman.

KATE HUBBARD
Observer magazine

CONTRIBUTORS: Paul Dixon, Lesa Miles, Martin Brockwell, C. West, E. Strobes.

£10 paid for entries

IN HIS PLANS for the national lottery, Peter Brooke, the heritage minister, has seized the chance to smooth his Farmer Toff image and convince the chattering classes that he is just as elitist as they are.

But his policy of clobbering the yobbish football pools may yet backfire. For the promoters have seen the national lottery coming and have been busily distributing huge amounts of largesse to plebeian causes (like football ground safety) rather than to Glyndebourne.

If pools takings are clobbered by the lottery, as Brooke clearly intends, who will replace the promoters as national benefactors of populist causes? Could this be one more nail in the coffin of Thatcherdom, perhaps? Don't count on it.

The battle for a "square deal" for the pools is only just beginning. It will be led by two of Brooke's eminent parliamentary colleagues, who are directors of the pools PR firm Westminster Communications: Tory MPs Sir Keith Speed; and the ubiquitous Right Hon Sir Marcus Fox.

The latter is not only chairman of the Tory backbenchers but also of the powerful selection body that chooses members of the Commons select committees.

THE LAST DAY before the Christmas break is always a good time for announcements about Ulster to be slipped through almost unnoticed.

Thus did the government reveal its appointment of "distinguished" brief Louis Blom-Cooper to oversee conditions in Royal Ulster Constabulary interrogation units, especially at the controversial Castlereagh holding centre.

Suspects detained in the three holding centres now in operation are generally deprived of access to a lawyer for seven days. Any admission they may allegedly make is considered by a judge sitting alone and without a jury.

Why Sir Patrick Mayhew, the secretary of state, thinks Blom-Cooper is the best man to maintain public confidence in the administration of the centres is not clear. In his previous incarnation as chairman of the Press Council, Blom-Cooper was largely ignored by those he was supposedly regulating and the council was eventually wound up.

His most recent experience as head of the trade body representing 0898- telephone services is also less than inspiring. Although Blom-Cooper was able to insist on chatlines recording all their callers, he won't find the RUC nearly as helpful — it has refused to join every other police force in taping interviews, apparently because of fears that the recordings could go missing (not exactly a sign of police efficiency).

This is a pity, as such a move would prevent false allegations being made against the RUC in court — as well as offering perhaps a little more reassurance than occasional visits from a barrister can provide that all is well.

How Blom-Cooper can inspect the centres unannounced — vital if the public is to have confidence in his performance — is a mystery given that he lives in some splendour in southern England. Unless he is prepared to make parachute landings or amphibious manoeuvres under cover of darkness, it's hard to believe the RUC will be unaware of his arrival at Belfast airport.

BURGEONING government debt means Whitehall is about to embark on a desperate search for cash — and a hint of what's in store comes from leaked Northern Ireland office documents on plans to sell off the local water supply.

Privatisation has fallen behind in Ulster, not least because of fears that the IRA and UDA might want to add utilities to their impressive investment portfolios of bars, taxi firms, estate agencies and video shops.

Secretary of state Sir Patrick Mayhew has therefore decided to sell water to a single trade purchaser, rather than through a public share issue. An anonymous civil servant, considering the plans in a (supposedly) confidential internal memo, saw a precedent in the making. "A trade sale would have major repercussions, given that all previous privatisations of utilities dealing direct with the public have been through flotations..." he or she wrote.

Hardly the Thatcherite vision of creating a share-owning democracy — but Sir Patrick has nonetheless decided to get the ball rolling, allocating £10 million for a report on how to introduce water metering and computerised billing.

Helping to sell state assets is obviously the business to be in. According to its latest accounts, costs associated with the privatisation of another local utility, Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE), have reached a remarkable £43 million. This is surprising given that NIE has yet to be sold.

Last year's planned sale was aborted at the last moment leaving the province engulfed by billboards explaining to the uninitiated possible uses for electricity. Local media owners look forward to another ad blitz in the spring, by which time Mayhew hopes to have figured out how to sell off the company's power stations with the minimum number of troublesome workers still employed.

Needless to say, NIE customers are already feeling the benefit of the proposed sale — disconnections and bills have both risen.

JIMMY "I.R." Wray, ebullient Labour MP for Glasgow Provan, has developed an intriguing sideline as a jewellery salesman, his place of business being the Palace of Westminster.

Fellow MPs, Labour and Tory alike, are approached by the rubicund Glaswegian who flourishes a bundle of watches and other items of jewellery in the manner of a 1940s spiv, complete with the assurance that they haven't been knocked off.

Wray does, however, keep fairly rum company: he has spoken up against the police for harassing Glasgow crime boss Arthur Thompson, one of his constituents, and he has even made the jocular boast that the serjeant-at-arms has given permission for him to fit a wall-safe in his office.

However, Wray already has one dissatisfied customer in Alan Meale, Labour MP for Mansfield. Knowing Meale to be a lover of racing, Wray told him he had just the thing for his living-room and proceeded to describe a pair of brass figurines of jockeys riding high in the saddle atop galloping steeds.

Meale's eyes lit up, and knowing Wray to be a man of probity parted with £500 then and there. A few days later Wray delivered the figurines, elaborately wrapped in brown paper and string, leaving for another appointment before Meale could unwrap them. When he did so, Meale was disappointed to find the brass figurines were of medieval knights astride horses in stately repose. His wife has insisted he recover his money as soon as Parliament returns.

RENT-A-QUOTE MP Geoffrey Dickens, the tea-dancing Conservative member for Littleborough and Saddleworth, had two large stone balls stolen from the top of the gateposts outside his house in the Lancashire village of Greenfield a few months ago.

Determined to prevent any further such outrages, he installed two huge security floodlights which, alas, shine directly into the road, dazzling oncoming traffic as it comes round the bend before his house.

Several drivers have narrowly avoided crashing into the law 'n' order MP's front wall in recent weeks. The talkative Dickens, whose mouth is almost as big as his girth, may soon find himself chatting to police — helping them with their inquiries.

'Backbiter'

HONOURS

SOMERSET environmentalists were amused to see Mrs Angela Yeoman, a prominent Tory in the county, receive an OBE in the new year's honours list for "services to the environment".

Mrs Yeoman chairs and owns Britain's largest private quarrying company, Foster Yeoman, whose two super-quarries in the Mendip Hills and Loch Linnhie, Scotland, among the largest in Europe, have done so much to enhance the environment of Somerset and the Highlands.

When she sought her last massive extension in Somerset, all the local environmental groups objected (clearly unreasonably) that quarrying deep below the water table in Somerset's prime aquifer might cause lasting harm to the county's ecology.

Mrs Yeoman set the relevant (ruling Conservative party) county councillors' minds at rest, however, by taking them and their spouses on a luxurious, all-expenses-paid "study tour" of her Scottish operation. They approved her extension.

THE NEW BOYS (5)

Alan Milburn

THE NEW Labour member for Darlington, Alan Milburn, 34, went through a painful process of ideological and personal upheaval in the 1980s as he searched for a foothold in the party's career structure. He mastered the transition from unkempt student leftie to Kinnockite clothes-mannequin with evident ease.

He began the decade as a Trotskyist and member of the International Marxist Group, until it split and half its members joined the Labour Party in the early 1980s. Milburn joined the Newcastle-Upon-Tyne Central Labour party in 1984, only five years before being selected as a parliamentary candidate. By clinging to the coat-tails of Jim Cousins, the Newcastle Central MP first elected in 1987, he was able to become chair of the CLP in 1988.

The issue in which he took the keenest interest in the mid-1980s was unilateralism, and he was at one point chair of Trade Union CND. But he quickly jettisoned this policy when a parliamentary candidature was in prospect and, as a crowning touch, he now supports a fourth Trident boat.

A perpetual student at Lancaster and Newcastle universities, he subsequently became coordinator of the leftist Trade Union Studies Information Unit. When TUSIU closed down through the withdrawal of local authority money, his friends at North Tyneside council gave him a job as senior economic development officer, which he held until April, presiding over the North Shields Meadowell riots.

Most of the causes he has adopted, such as the Save Our Shipyards Campaign, have ended in ignominious failure, leading observers of his progress to credit him with a reverse Midas touch. His efforts to persuade the government to maintain Darlington's assisted area status (now that it is a Labour and not a Tory marginal) are also likely to be forlorn.

Milburn married a future Labour councillor in Newcastle, Mo O'Toole, in the early 1980s. Although only in their early twenties, the couple decided they did not want to have children and O'Toole underwent sterilisation. A vasectomy was out of the question since Milburn continued to sow his wild oats in two fairly public affairs, first with the office administrator at TUSIU, then with a psychiatrist at a local hospital, Dr Ruth Friel, whom he arranged to succeed him as chair of Newcastle Central CLP in early 1990.

Later that year Milburn (who had left his wife) persuaded Dr Friel to leave her partner of five years' standing and become his official partner. They moved to Darlington and within a month she was pregnant with a baby he had previously never wished to have. During the election campaign, the local Tories made much of the fact that Milburn was pictured with partner Ruth and baby Joe in election literature, pointing out that the couple were unmarried. At one meeting a waggish Tory said he wanted to ask Milburn a question about family values: "Which family do you value most?"

However, this mud-slinging was not enough to secure the seat for its revolting incumbent, Michael "Handbag" Fallon.

ITV

New Franchise Holders

(ITV)

THE platitude that time is a great healer depends purely on the assumption that memories fade. In the matter of public reputations, though, the process depends not just on forgetting but on the availability of a more horrible recent model for comparison.

Neil Kinnock can become a lovable television personality and Richard Nixon can be the subject of a loving biography by Jonathan Aitken not merely because distance heals over details, but because contemporary events have provided in John Major a bigger jerk than the one and, in George Bush, as slippery a customer as the other.

Similarly Roland Rat — at the moment a symbol, because of his work at TV-am, for the worst of British television — may by next year have been installed as professor of media studies at a redbrick university. The reason is TV-am's successor *GMTV* (ITV, weekdays, 6-9am), a show which aims so low as to induce immediate nostalgia for the innocent populism of the glove puppet.

It is not yet clear whether *GMTV*'s presenters — Mike Wilson and Fiona Armstrong on weekdays, Eammon Holmes and Anne Davies at weekends — are glove puppets, although programme director Lis Howell has made it quite clear that they are designed so that people want to, er, put a hand up their costumes. A central editorial qualification for her presenters, Howell has admitted to the press, is "Fanciability" (an air-brushing of the word GMTV uses in internal memos).

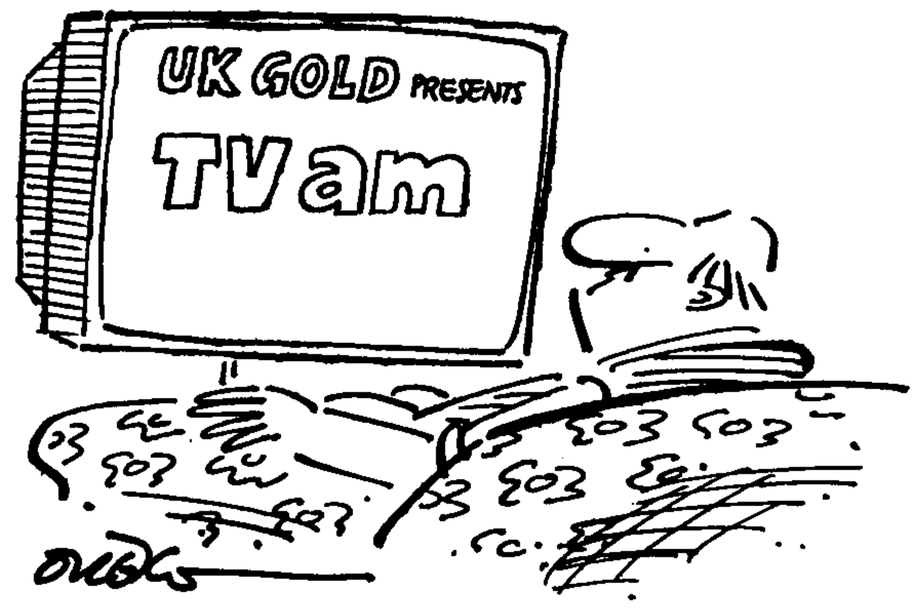
Well, each to their own; but Square Eyes, for one, would find the prospect of sex with any of the *GMTV* team fairly appalling. "Well, coming up in the next half hour, foreplay, including soiz... soiz... well, let's call it 69, ha, ha, ha. Oh, I'm just hearing we've lost the foreplay. But, don't worry, Dr Hillary Jones is with us, in a few minutes, talking about erection problems, the phone lines are open. Now, let me turn to you, down there. What people want to know is: how do you feel?... So, what you're saying is, you're nearly there? Sorry, we've got to stop you there... now, come downstairs and see how high you can build a tower of toast..."

The Toast Office Tower — in which small stars are asked to construct an edifice of burned bread — is likely to be a major part of Roland Rat's comparative defence of himself when he takes up his university post. But he is also likely to refer to the frequent moments on *GMTV* when one of the hosts suddenly stops an interview and the viewer assumes they are introducing more serious news, a view soon proved deluded.

There was a remarkable example last Friday. "Let's just break off from talking about whether Elvis is still alive...", said Eammon Holmes. Saddam? The IRA? Bosnia? Er, no "...to find out the answer to Jeremy Beadle's Today's The Day Quiz."

Carlton, replacing Thames, has so far shown an alarming tendency in its network offerings to seek presentational talent in the geriatric ward of the medium rather than the nursery. *Surprise Party* — which is *This Is Your Life* out of *Beadle's About* — resurrected Michael Parkinson, there is a document series for Desmond Wilcox and the star solo comedian is *Dave Allen* (Thursdays, 9.30pm). The latter would matter less if Allen had kept his act fresh, but he is embarrassingly stuck in the belief that humour arises from putting "bloody" in the punchline. One joke — chosen by Carlton for a trailer — was at least 20 years old: "The average family has 1.9 children. What the hell is .9 of a child?" At the moment, it is hard to see Carlton's grand strategy, unless market research has shown substantial untapped advertising in third age products like Complan and surgical stockings.

Typical of Carlton's output for London alone is *Capital Woman* (Mondays, 2.15pm), a live 30-minute magazine show hosted from Whiteleys shopping mall in Bayswater by Anneka Rice. One of the most difficult stages of a franchise handover for a viewer is the few weeks at the beginning when the company is constantly stressing its Closeness To The Community. This is particularly the case with the products of the new London weekday company which



— unlike the late Thames and the surviving London Weekend — has no kind of capital stamp on its name, unless Carlton is the yuppie pronunciation of Charlton.

Accordingly, co-presenter Stephen Gardner keeps telling his partner: "Like you, Annie, I'm concerned about the city I live and work in..." Anneka nods. Square Eyes would like to suggest that — in the next franchise round — it should become obligatory for any new regional presenter making such claims to reveal length of residence in the transmission area and/or possession of weekend accommodation elsewhere. Otherwise, *Capital Woman* showed the dangers of a show being live for the sake of it. Annie's first big chat — with a chef at Poons — collapsed when he turned his back and spoke in Chinese. "Mr Wang doesn't seem to have very much to say!" giggled Anneka. What was touching was Anneka's apparent belief that her interview would have been more illuminating if he had spoken English.

The one-hour regional news show *London Tonight* (nightly, 6pm) — hosted by Alastair Stewart and Fiona Foster — confirmed Square Eye's guesses about it based on the unofficial pilot *Missing*, reviewed in the last issue. What he or she hadn't guessed was that the show would out-America America by announcing the capital's violent crimes of the day to a back-beat of music: a sort of Topped Ten.

Welcome, then, to the new dispensation, in which the government's greedy new scheme to hand out franchises to the highest bidder must now be paid for by the programmes. Whatever *GMTV*'s criterion for presenters, the qualification for an ITV programme now is, without doubt, Buckability.

'Square Eyes'

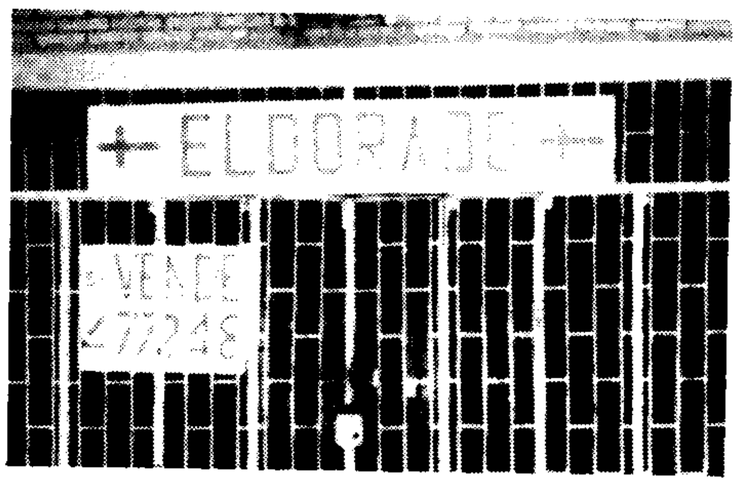
MEDIA NEWS

NEWSPAPERS have been awash with flattering profiles of Liz Forgan, the new BBC vicereine, during the past week.

Recalling a speech at the Edinburgh television festival in which she complained of "money spent on the central bureaucracy" which "never gets anywhere near the screen", many have concluded that, in the words of one report on Monday, "she is expected to be a fierce critic of any BBC spending which does not produce programmes".

We look forward, then, to hearing her criticise her new boss, John Birt, for spending more than £100,000 to buy out the "golden handcuffs" bonus which Forgan's previous employers, Channel 4, secretly paid her 16 months ago.

I-SPY



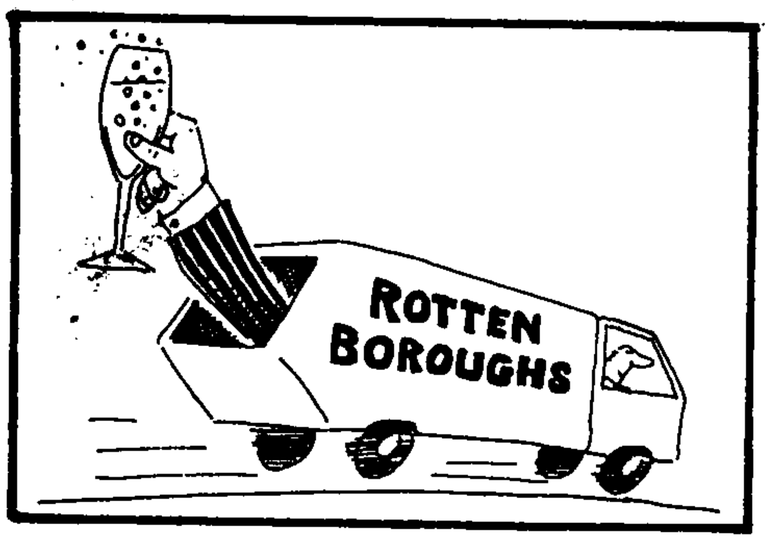
Submitted by Mrs M. Dowling. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

MANY premier league soccer club managers have loudly condemned Sky-TV's exclusive soccer coverage and the scheduling absurdities that often force clubs to play gruelling mini-marathons in a short space of time.

Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson, whose club is one of those that stands to lose most from a clogged fixture calendar, has not, however, complained.

By an amazing coincidence, Alex's son Jason is an assistant producer at Sky soccer, an incredible achievement for one so young and a testament to his remarkably precocious talent. No doubt this supremely gifted youngster has been able to furnish dad with the kind of insight into the needs of Sky-TV that other managers are unable to receive.

CORPORATION STREET
LONDON
CARLTON
An everyday story of Broadcasting Folk
LIFTS
"WE WON THE FRANCHISE FROM THAMES ...
AND IT'S A REVOLUTION IN INDEPENDENT TELEVISION! ...
Paul Jackson DIRECTOR OF AROGS
Jonathan Powell
AND A CHANCE FOR BRILLIANT NEW IDEAS! ...
SO WHAT HAVE WE GOT LINED UP? ...
BAR
ER, ANNEKA RICE, JONATHAN ROSS, CHRIS TARRANT, MICHAEL PARKINSON ..."
"Trebles & old bores all round!"
Ken Pyne



MURKEYSIDE

LABOUR-controlled West Midlands police authority has remained pitifully quiet over the Birmingham Six, the disbanded serious crimes *squad and many other* scandals that have seen innocent people jailed for long periods. But all that may now be about to change...

A Labour-controlled police authority might be expected to take a vigorous line against Knackerite injustice, frame-ups and the like — but not when that authority is chaired by Birmingham Labour councillor Lionel Jones.

Duty has dictated that Lionel form strong links with senior West Midlands officers, and he proudly displays the ties given by each squad — including that of the disgraced former serious crime squad, now effectively reformed under a new name. However, Jones's "going native" has effectively meant that Britain's most discredited force has gone almost entirely unquestioned by one of the few bodies able to influence it.

And this has led to a sneaky bit of manoeuvring in Jones's ward Labour party in Hodge Hill.

Jones went to his ward-selection meeting expecting the formality of a reselection for the next local elections in 1994. He arrived to find just 17 people there — 16 ward members, plus his old election agent Eddie Rochford, who had been contacted specially to request him to stand.

Most city reselection meetings have had several dozens in attendance. Jones's was the smallest ever known. Coincidentally it was headed by Anne Davis, wife of Hodge Hill MP, Terry Davis. The group listened to Jones's hastily cobbled-together speech begging them to reselect him — and then voted 14-2 for Eddie Rochford, effectively booting Jones off the police authority once his term of office on the council ends.

MEANWHILE top brass in Murkeyside police are none too happy about the case of Richard Dodd.

Dodd was arrested in 1987 by members of the north-west regional crime squad after they found drugs allegedly worth £5,000 under the front seat of his car. But strange things emerged when the case came to trial: the police hadn't bothered to fingerprint the package — a standard procedure, one would have thought, in cases like this; and the "£5,000 worth" of drugs were later valued at £200.

As the trial progressed it became clear that Dodd had been framed. One of the arresting officers said as much under oath. The jury took only 10 minutes to acquit him of all three charges of possession of dangerous drugs.

Dodd believed he'd been the victim of a frame-up by an influential police informant from the local underworld who held a grudge against him. The case against Dodd collapsed because the only evidence, apart from the "find", was the word of the unidentified informant.

Despite acquittal, Dodd still felt he needed to clear his name by establishing the informant's identity and finding out who had planted the drugs.

Dodd continued a vigorous questioning of the Merseyside police hierarchy to find out who had framed him. The reply he got from deputy chief constable David Howe last July stated: "The informant did not contact the police direct; the information provided was passed to the officers by another agency. *Neither the police or the other agency are aware of the informant's identity.*"

Howe had evidently not made himself aware of the trial statement in which chief prosecutor C.J. Cornwall told the judge: "I think it is right the jury should know that the police *do in fact know* the name of the informant and, therefore, it is not a wholly anonymous telephone call that happened to be received and was acted on."

When this point was subsequently drawn to his attention, Howe *changed* his story. The police did know the informant, but only by his pseudonym! "It may well be that the pseudonym was the 'name of the informant' referred to by Mr Cornwall..." Howe opined. "The pseudonym was not disclosed at the time of the trial as it may have led to the discovery of the informant's identity."

With official replies like this, Dodd has abandoned all hope of police help in finding the criminal who planted the drugs. In desperation he is now offering a £1,000 reward for information received from the public. Those phoning need not use a pseudonym...

HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM

MORE tatty details of the Labour-run council's privatisation of its schools stock are coming to light following the *Eye*'s recent revelations.

Last year Hammersmith and Fulham sold its Harwood primary school site to the Shepherds Bush Housing Association (SBHA) for a nominal sum, despite promising St John's, a run-down school which still has outside lavatories, that it could move into the vacant site. Many locals were furious, claiming that Harwood, one of the old London county council "sunshine" schools, should never have closed in the first place.

Opponents of the Harwood scheme have now uncovered some very interesting information. In granting the Shepherds Bush Housing Association application, the council planning committee ignored Harwood's location within a conservation area. This had nothing to do with the fact that the committee chair, Coun Chris Graham, is a member of the housing association.

Having declared an interest in the proceedings, Graham voted in favour of SBHA's application. Although this is perfectly legal, opponents of the scheme could be forgiven for deriding it as unethical. Graham also allowed Shepherd's Bush to speak in favour of its own application — by an amazing coincidence, a spokesman happened to have a prepared statement — while objectors to the development were given just five minutes' notice that they could put their case.

Next, the council's environment committee refused to meet a delegation of concerned residents. That had nothing to do with the fact that the council's environment chair, Coun Sally Powell, is on the SBHA management committee.

Then the education committee refused to consider a petition from more than 1,500 parents and residents opposing the plans. One of the committee members, Coun Josie Wicks, is also an SBHA member.

The Harwood site will be sold to SBHA at 75 per cent discount.

BENT

THE HONEYMOON is over for Brian Queen, the new Bent housing director who foolishly pledged to end decades of chaos in the barmy borough's housing department.

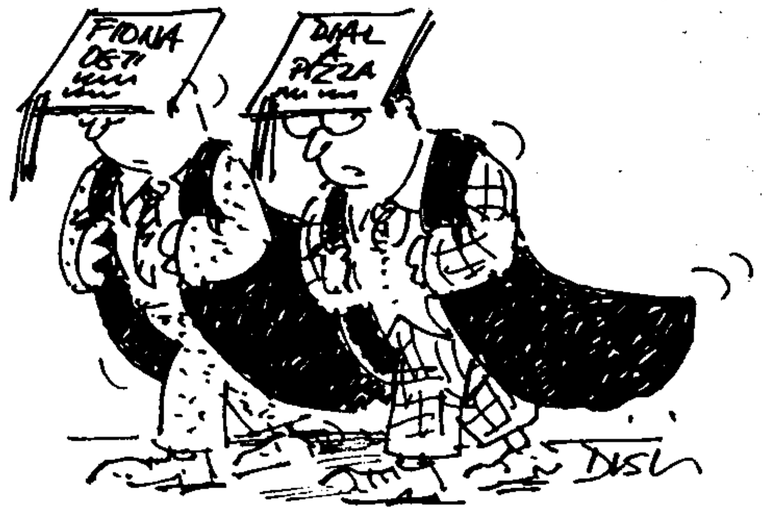
The no-nonsense Queen enthusiastically promoted the ruling Tory group's fundamentalist privatisation measures, and his first radical move, just before Christmas, was to bring in a private housing consultancy group, CSL, to run Willesden's Church End estate, much to the tenants' chagrin.

By the kind of amazing coincidence that could only happen in Bent, CSL happens to be the firm for whom Queen worked before being appointed Bent's housing director! Two other current senior Bent housing officials also used to work for CSL.

But Queen isn't keen on the news spreading. When a representative from the campaign group London Link handed out leaflets at a public meeting revealing the link, Queen called on Inspector Knacker to eject the exposer amid much uproar and accusations from union officials that he had himself provoked and intimidated the visitor.

What is Queen afraid of? He sold his 10,000 shares in CSL before leaving the organisation and, of course, took no part in its winning the Church End contract.

PERHAPS Queen should instead concentrate on curing illiteracy in the borough's new government-backed housing agency, Harlesden City Challenge, set up recently with £37.5 million of public money to regenerate the slumland.



"I had no idea the college was this strapped for funds, Vice-Chancellor"

One of City Challenge's first tasks is to implement the £5m Employment Routeways Programme, aimed at giving the youth of Harlesden social skills and jobs. But it's the City Challenge team that needs the training. A glance at letters from its chief executive Gerry Davis to project leaders and partners reveals elementary spelling mistakes, bad grammar and incoherent meaning.

Under the heading "Literacy and Numeracy Scheme", for instance, Davis's team makes the astounding claim that "15 per cent of pupils from the city challenge area enter secondary education without or with poor literacy and numeracy skills." Er, quite. The report concludes: "The projet (sic) will ensure that young people make more of the crucial transition periods, for revision, leisure activity development and the preparation of the next phase." Even £37.5 million might not be enough...

BIRMINGHAM

CRANKY feminists who run Birmingham city council's wimmin's unit are under scrutiny after revelations of a series of bizarre payments made to the pals of senior officers.

Each year the unit spends about £1 million, mostly on the so-called Women's Festival, a two-week shindig of both worthy and foolish events that are notorious mainly because hardly anyone attends them.

But the festival has gained new notoriety — for events that apparently never happened.

Eye inquiries reveal that invoices have been raised for a number of allegedly phantom drama workshops, poetry readings and so on. While thousands of pounds have been paid to "organisers", checks with the alleged venues find no records of their having happened. With the cash long gone, will city treasurer Roger Burton order an inquiry? Er, no.

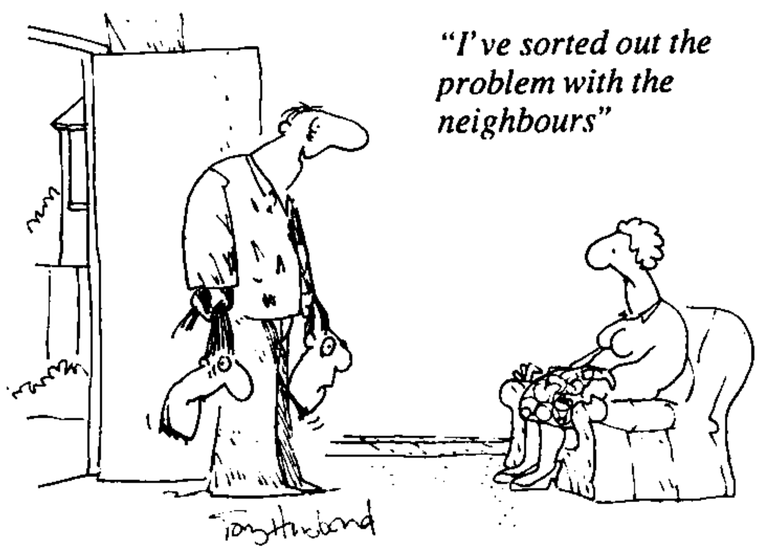
Meanwhile the women's unit black chief Mrs Nancy Johnson is involved in an entirely separate row with the Housing Corporation over her chairmanship of the Harambee Housing Association, which controls 400 houses and flats, mainly for Afro-Caribbeans, especially the elderly or mentally ill.

The corporation, the governing body for housing associations, recently decided to check Harambee's accounts. To its horror it found debts of £250,000, including £70,000 in uncollected rents, £50,000 in mortgage interest payments and a wad of unpaid gas, electricity and maintenance bills.

When it tried to hold a meeting with Johnson at Harambee's Handsworth HQ, the building was invaded by a gang of Johnson's henchpersons, styling themselves as "black activists". They held the Housing Corporation's representative prisoner and threatened to burn down the building with them in it and "restart the Handsworth riots" unless the corporation stopped interfering. Housing Corporation boss Anthony Meyer subsequently demanded Johnson's resignation — but she is refusing to budge.

The key to that may lie in the accounting system employed by Harambee. Housing Corporation accountants have already discovered that Johnson was claiming £10 almost every day for years of "supervising trainees". Quite who was supervised and when is under searching scrutiny.

Now the corporation has decided to put an end to Harambee's antics by threatening to make Johnson's committee responsible for the debts. They resigned immediately. In a second sneakily right-on move, Patricia Scotland, Britain's first female Afro-Caribbean QC, was appointed by the corporation to investigate Harambee. Johnson is expected to depart quite soon.



"I've sorted out the problem with the neighbours"

UN NEWS

THE question of sanctions against Iraq comes up for renewal at the United Nations security council next week, the main official objection to dropping them being Baghdad's refusal to name its suppliers of high technology weapons.

This excuse is *somewhat* weakened by revelations that the British government, a permanent member of the security council, has been involved in, er, supplying weapons technology to Iraq. But no matter. The sudden scare whipped up over Iraqi anti-aircraft weapons in that country's southern exclusion zone should make it easy for Britain and America to call for the sanctions to be maintained.

International lawyers, however, contrast events in southern Iraq with those in Bosnia. The first and only Iraqi plane to defy a no-fly zone, unilaterally imposed by the west, was shot down immediately. Over Bosnia the first 50 or so Serbian violations of the no-fly zone, imposed by the security council, led to... well, yet another resolution expressing even deeper concern.

In the meantime, the loony French commander of UNFROFOR sits in Sarajevo ignoring the shelling of civilians, but claiming that the mortar bombing of his own headquarters was performed by Bosnians who sneaked up to the Serbian lines to make it seem like those nice Chetniks might be responsible. No wonder the Bosnians think it would be a step forward if the UN troops simply issued condoms to the Serbian rapists: that, at least, would be more than they are doing now.

Of course Lord Owen, aka Dr Death, having split and destroyed any political party he has ever joined, is playing a similarly constructive role in the Balkans: trying to force the Bosnians to accept a form of the cantonization which the foreign office has been privately advocating since the beginning. That it legitimizes the effect of ethnic cleansing is no great problem to the Machiavellians of our age, who clearly think "peace" in the region is threatened by the Bosnians attempting to break the Serbian siege.

Among those Machiavellians is the top cop-out Copt himself, Boutros Boutros Ghali, secretary-general of the UN. In a desperate attempt to gloss over his deep unpopularity, his spin doctors will soon claim that the people in Sarajevo were not, as reported, booing him but cheering him — as in "Boo-Boo! Boo-Boo!"

LIBEL NEWS

LAST YEAR was definitely not a good one for clients of Peter Carter-Fuck — Jani Allan, Mona Bawens and Mitch Mitchell all fared badly in libel actions, and towards the end of December another name joined the list: Bob Astles, former henchman of Ugandan dictator Idi Amin.

An interviewee on a 1986 BBC World Service edition of *Network Africa* suggested that Astles had been involved in arrests, intelligence gathering and murder squads. Astles, who had been acquitted of two murder charges in Uganda, sued for libel in 1987 using Carter-Fuck's firm, and after much delay the case was finally due to be heard this month.

The BBC came up with 15 witnesses, but the key turn came when the BBC found a new witness in Britain who claimed to have seen Astles with Archbishop Janani Luwum in a cell at the State Research Bureau only a couple of hours before Luwum's murder.

The case was settled on the basis that the BBC would not apologise or pay damages but would make a contribution towards Carter-Fuck's costs. Since Astles has no money and lives in a friend's house, Carter-Fuck, who was plainly banking on the BBC being unable to mount a plausible defence, must be licking his wounds.

DOWN ON THE FARM

with 'Old Muckspreader'

THE NEW YEAR opens just as the last 20 have — with the number of farming folk continuing to decline and the volume of money being burned in subsidising them spiralling upwards.

Sixty percent of the European community's budget now goes to subsidising an illusion.

THE ULTIMATE evolution of daft farming policies is where the product eats humans. And an enterprising Tweeddale farmer says he is close to achieving this ideal.

His wheeze, achieved without any noticeable claim on public funds, is to create a lake, sorry, a loch, and stock it with... piranha fish. Farmer Anderson says he is confident that such is the fascination with the macabre in the Scottish soul that thousands will pay to dangle their sandwiches or aunties in the waters of his "Piranha Pool".

With a little bit of heating to help the fish through the winter, Anderson reckons he can turnover more with these evil fish than he could ever achieve with sheep or barley.

KEITH ADAMS, special adviser to John Selwyn Gummer, the oleaginous agriculture minister, enjoys an ambivalent reputation in Whitehall and Conservative Central Office.

His "colleagues" at the MAFF HQ complain that he keeps alerting the minister to civil service plots, while party thought-police complain that he does not alert sleepy Mr Gummer enough. Adams teases his critics by quoting Swift: "Climbing is performed in the same posture as creeping".

THE DANISH presidency of the EC will see the subtle promotion of a new food — produced without farmers — which commission authorities seek to accelerate to all our tummies.

"DRY N.3", micro-encapsulated fish oil, has been developed by Danish corporation Dan-Chem of Ballerup. Derived from fish oils, the claim is that the food prevents arthritis, psoriasis and migraine.

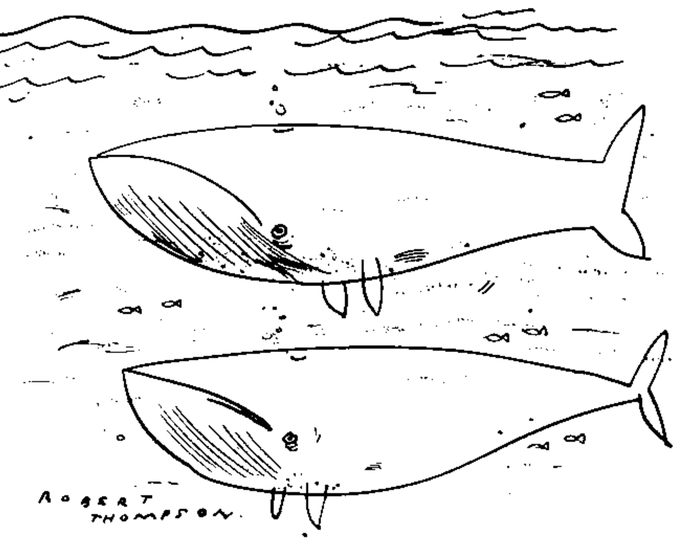
The EC has it in mind to make us all take our cod liver oil by putting DRY N.3 into our bread, pizzas and sugar. It seems likely that the Omega-3 fatty acids of marine animals do inhibit heart disease and other disorders, but isn't it an odd leap for the commission to seek to make medication through food compulsory?

THE scientific veterinary committee of the EC has been directed by the commission to go slow on its draft directive on the cruelty associated with the live transport of farm animals.

The commission says, quite accurately, that the French, Italians, Spaniards and Greeks would never comply with any maximum travelling time or the proposed eight hours of pre-slaughter fattening. The animal-loving Brits are set to lose out again.

COMPASSION in World Farming was traumatised by the Christmas massacre of turkeys. It opens 1993 with a ditty by Kirsten Harting:
Twenty million chickens/ lost their lives today/ While I sat here and/ thought of ways/ to become a better person.
Of the twenty million chickens/ I ate only one/ What difference would it make/ If I ate none.

CIWF is launching a fusillade of criticism against the mild herbivore Julian West of the MAFF's animal welfare division — but he can do little. Today, all power is in Brussels.



"Keep your voice down – my wife's only 27 miles away"

CLINTON UPDATE

THE NEW-LOOK Clinton cabinet, so beloved of some in the British Labour party, looks distressingly like the old. All but three members are lawyers with big lobbying credentials.

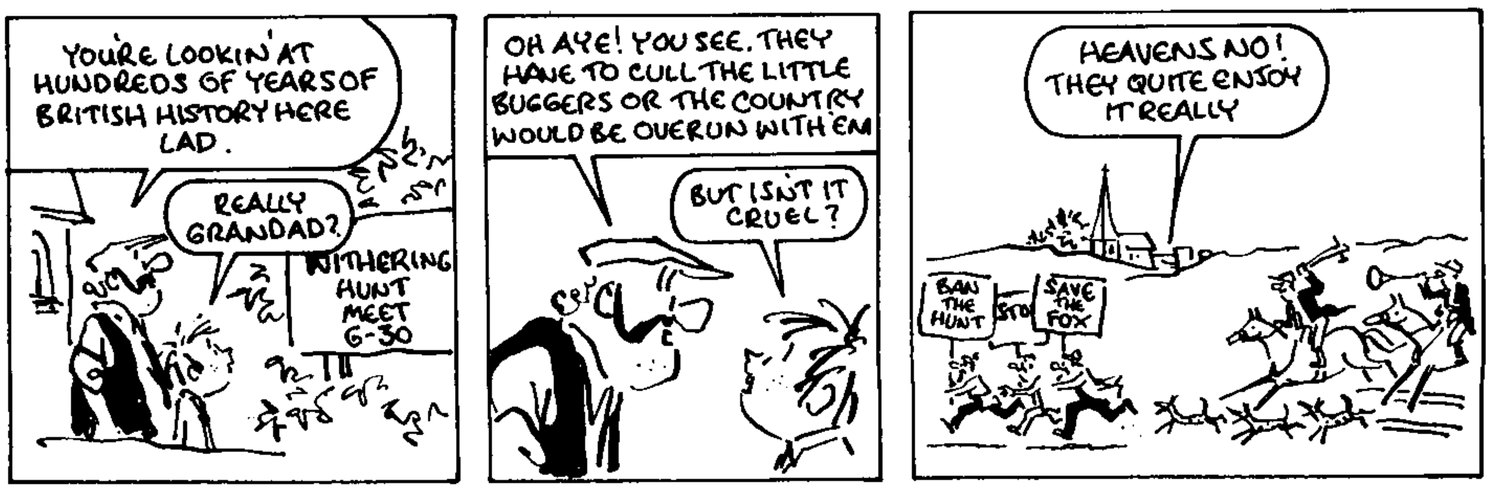
For those unfamiliar with Washington, this means "people who have been stuffing legislators' pockets with cheques in order to secure the passing of legislation against the public interest". The one so-called radical (and a non-lawyer) is education secretary Donna Shalala.

At first glance the appointment of an Arab-American woman might seem a bold step for a president who owed so much to the Israeli lobby that he promised to build a Glatt Kosher kitchen in the White House. But when one learns that she was made a "friend of Jerusalem" by Teddy Kollek and has spent 10 years with financiers like Felix Rohatyn on the board of the body that oversees bond-raising for New York City, one appreciates just how radical she really is.

One consolation is that the Likudniks of the Israel lobby have been stiffed by Slick Willy. Although he has appointed quite a few Jews, they are not the *right* kind of Jews for the Shamir fan club. Some are suspected of being Americans, rather than temporarily absent Israelis, while others were prominent in Americans for Peace Now — the Rabin fan club. The people who put up much of the money for Willy now feel less than tumescent over his appointments, and they sob on the shoulders of any pressperson who will listen.

Old Macdonald

ALBERT


YOU'RE LOOKIN' AT HUNDREDS OF YEARS OF BRITISH HISTORY HERE LAD.
REALLY GRANDAD?
WITHERING HUNT MEET G-30
OH AYE! YOU SEE. THEY HAVE TO CULL THE LITTLE BUGGERS OR THE COUNTRY WOULD BE OVERUN WITH 'EM
BUT ISN'T IT CRUEL?
HEAVENS NO! THEY QUITE ENJOY IT REALLY
BAN THE HUNT
SAVE THE FOX

NOOKS and CORNERS

IS A particularly horrible year recedes into memory, I have one last task to perform: the choice of the Macmillan Award for the Most Philistine Local Authority of 1992.

The competition was keen, with two strong contenders from north Britain. Borders regional council, for its deferential, fawning, feudal acquiescence in the cynical demolition of Minto House by My Lord Minto, a former convener of the authority (*Eyes* 803 and 804); and Renfrew district council for its continuing maltreatment of the fine and ancient new university town of Paisley (*Eyes 805 and 808*).

Then there are the candidates in London. It is difficult to know which to choose of the several local authorities doing their best to reduce the capital to a squalid, Third World metropolis which makes Calcutta seem elegant and well-run by comparison.

Perhaps the People's Republic of Camden, long a byword for inefficiency and cynical hypocrisy? I see that, despite intelligent local opposition; despite the collapse of the property boom; despite the astonishing incompetence, indecisiveness and intangibility of British Rail's plans for the proposed new Channel tunnel interchange station, the good councillors of Camden have nevertheless given planning permission to the ridiculous development scheme for King's Cross by, guess who: shining white Sir Norman Foster — the architect whom everybody loves to fawn before — even though it is alien and irrelevant to the site, unnecessarily destructive of the existing industrial structures which stand there as well as naive in conception and increasingly impractical and redundant.

But this year the award must be taken by joint winners from the provinces: two symbiotic local authorities who, in defiance of local and national opinion, have connived and conspired to demolish a historic building of clear public utility and urban value purely to make money. I refer, of course, to the attempt to destroy the Public Library in Kidderminster by the unholy alliance of Wyre district council and Hereford & Worcester county council which I discussed in *Eyes* 791 and 805.

I am sorry to say that these two nauseating, Conservative-controlled councils have succeeded in their aim: the decent Victorian buildings are now

being demolished. The deadline has been met: as the DoE obligingly granted the county council a five-year certificate of immunity from listing on 9 September 1988, they had to come down before September this year.

English Heritage did not know this when, in January 1992, it listed the "triple institute of literature, science and art", the old School of Art, School of Science and Public Library of 1879-94, only to have to delist them shamefacedly a week later. So the county council knows the buildings are of listable quality. And, after all, Pevsner in the *Buildings of England*, noted how "the three buildings almost create a Civic Centre. A pity no more was made of them."

English Heritage also reported that the centre of sad, abused Kidderminster was worthy of being made a conservation area, but, naturally, Wyre district council declined to follow this advice — its director of planning, Mr Robert Watkins, claiming, preposterously, that the area proposed was too small and irregular in shape. Both authorities also asserted that English Heritage endorsed the lie that it would cost £2 million more to refurbish the existing buildings — something which EH denies.

So Kidderminster will get a spanking new public library — perhaps. More important, it will get yet another new shopping centre on part of the site: the real reason for all this chicanery and vandalism. The people of Kidderminster have certainly not been well served by the secretary of state for the national heritage, nor by the bureaucrats of the DoE nor, in the end, by English Heritage. But it is the county council, *together with* Wyre district council, who are responsible, in defiance of informed local opinion, for destroying one of the few buildings which make the centre of the town interesting.

Mr Jocelyn Stevens (who, I am interested to see, graciousLy accepted a CVO in the pathetic new year's honours despite denying he is an "establishment" man) thinks it a good idea to transfer many of English Heritage's properties to the care of local authorities. Would he really pass over any historic building to the tender care of the cynical councillors who control the destiny of Kidderminster and what were once the separate, proud counties of Worcestershire and Herefordshire? Perhaps he would.

Incidentally, the release of the 1962 cabinet papers confirms the awfulness of the man after whom my award is named, whose abetting the unnecessary demolition of the Euston "Arch" was his principal crime against civilization.

We now know that, having dismissed public protest against the destruction of Britain's greatest railway monument, the crashing old snob ordered a second opinion on the arch after being telegrammed by the Duke of Westminster, Lord Crawford and Balcarres, and other peers. But Harold Macmillan still demolished it, of course. I am sure our present odious road-obsessed, rail-hating government would do the same, so I suspect the Conservative councillors who are wrecking Kidderminster will be proud to win an award named after the old Tory fraud and war criminal.

'Piloti'

Bankers

MR Doug Brown describes himself as a bank investigator. As a former assistant manager with the Co-op bank, his specialist knowledge is useful to those checking errors and discrepancies in the banking system.

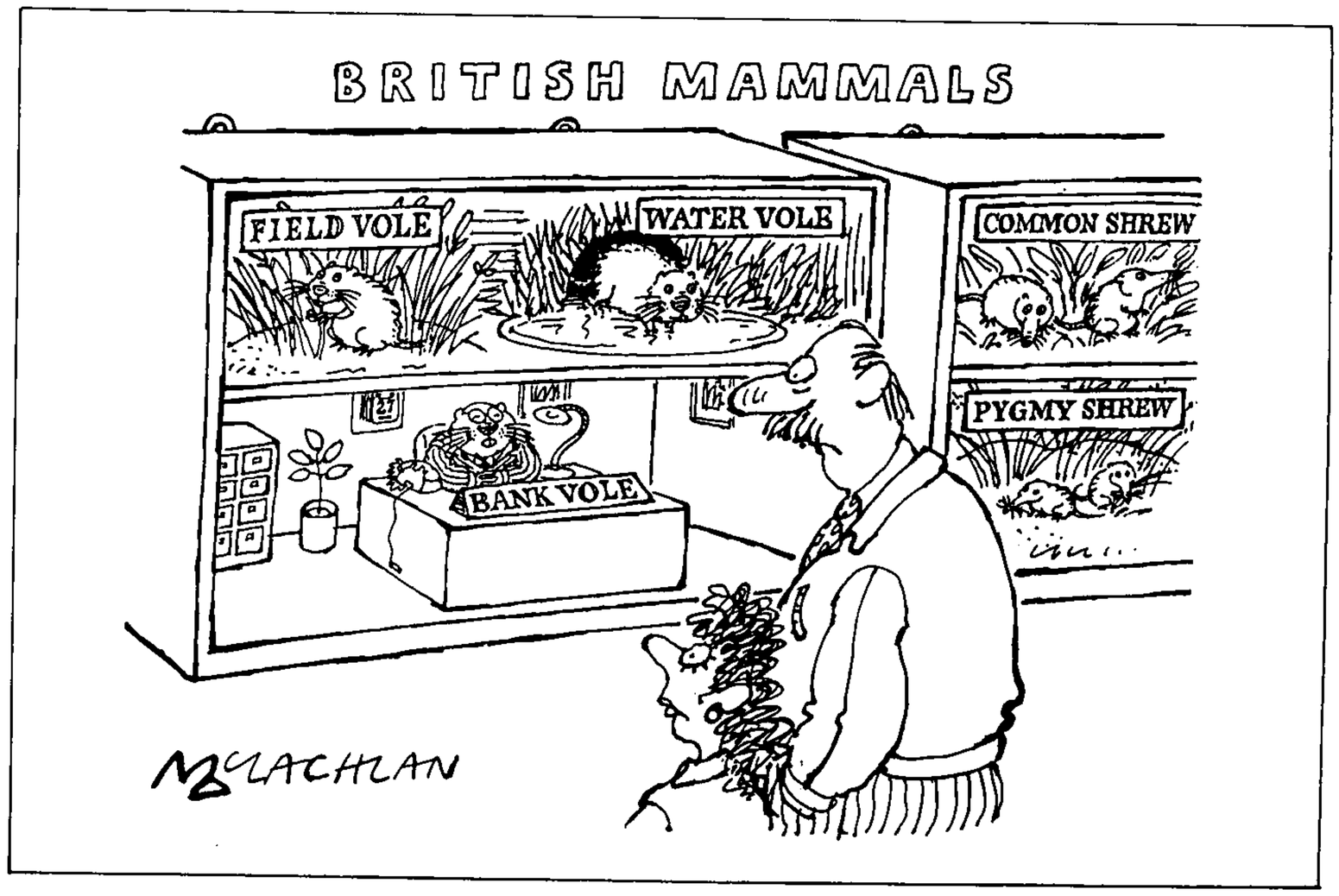
Mr Brown's advice is frequently sought by Alan Barnes of Neric Automation, Leicester, a computer consultancy that markets a programme called Account Master, which when installed on a computer uses a bank's own information to monitor accounts for errors.

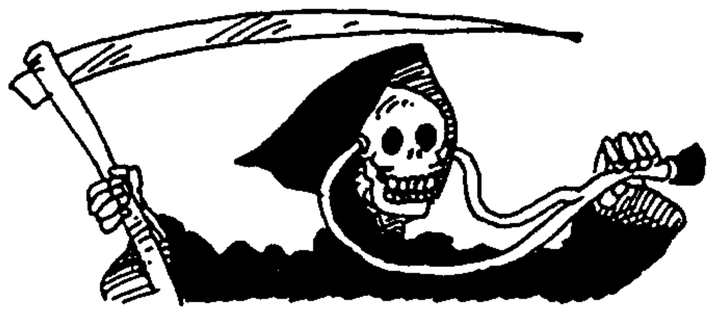
Ominously, of 20 accounts recently researched, overcharging by the banks was found on 11 of them: a margin of error of 55 percent! Last week Mr Brown uncovered a £2,100 overcharge on an overdraft of £6,500; but the most astonishing figure was discovered by Neric Automation last year when interest on three accounts held by one customer was found to be charged in one instance at 45 percent. The bank concerned, Lloyds, repaid £87,000 within seven days of the discovery.

According to Mr Brown, problems arise through staff cutbacks and the implementation of central banking systems. "Banking," he says, "is a people business and cannot be carried out efficiently on a shoestring. The pressure of senior staff nowadays means that figures are not always checked as often as they should be.

"Many errors," he added, "occur when a business overdraft is agreed with the local manager at a figure set for example at 2½ percent over base rate. If that figure is not correctly loaded on to the computer it can be frequently charged at the ordinary standard default rate which can be as high as 15 percent. The bank I worked for divided a unit of interest by 32: for example, 1 percent over base rate was put in as 0.32; but if by mistake that figure was loaded as 3.2 and is undetected then all hell can break loose."

Given the likelihood of error, why is it almost unheard of for a receiver to check whether a company in liquidation has been overcharged by its bank? Mr Barnes believes a number of liquidations have been associated with, if not actually caused by banks overcharging. "This reluctance and failure to check compounds and even at a stretch encourages overcharging," he says.





DOING THE ROUNDS

AT ROMFORD'S Oldchurch and Rush Green hospitals, general manager Stephen Eames continues to endear himself to staff (*Eye* 805). Mr Eames and his deputy, John Gillam, have cut services severely to try to ensure the shadow trust is in the black by opt-out day (1 April).

Nurses and the domestics who clean the operating theatres have been sacked; and many operations have been cancelled, despite angry protests from staff whose letters are repeatedly ignored. A memo has now been circulated to staff with the aim of "increasing underspending levels".

On 7 December, all portering overtime was cancelled, with drastic effects on the transport of patients around the hospital. Mail is now sent second class and all direct telephone lines have been removed "where not essential". The main corridors are now only cleaned three times a week instead of seven times, and all vacancies in the works department have been frozen.

No improvement works, however small, can be undertaken, and neither can expensive repairs like "radiators, bed pan washers, water boilers and nurse call handsets". All electric fires "that do not form part of the recognized heating source" have been removed from the hospital, and staff who bring them in "must face the consequences of confiscation".

Curiously, this frugality has yet to extend to the managers, whose offices and car pool have recently been replenished. Mr Eames has, however, shown commendable restraint by limiting himself to a J-registered red Audi.

● NHS DENTISTRY may soon fall further into the hands of the private sector. The NHS Dental Practice Board has just undertaken a project funded by BUPA with the knowledge of health secretary Virginia Bottomley "to assess the administrative system needed to operate a possible BUPA dental health product".

BUPA has expressed its enthusiasm "to be involved where an excellent facility in the public sector may provide subcontract services to the private sector". This doubtless comes as a huge relief to the 20 percent of the UK population who miss out on dental care.

● PHILIP CHUBB, chief executive of **Bristol's Southmead Health Independent Trust (SHIT)**, is trying to rectify a £1 million overspend by freezing nursing vacancies and banning the use of agency nursing staff who are often vital to maintaining minimum standards of care.

SHIT's impecuniosity has not, however, prevented the appointment of a director of information management (DIM) for only £35,000 pa, plus a Series 3 BMW. The new DIM will have his own place in the private managerial car park, from where he can watch other staff pay to park and ponder whether "developing an information-based culture within the trust" is more important than maintaining minimum standards of care on the wards.

SHIT is spending more money studying the reasons for the high level of staff sickness, though a connection between the ban on agency staff and the workload and morale of the permanent staff is unlikely to be made.

● **OXFORDSHIRE district health authority** is ploughing ahead with its plans to cut the 24-hour casualty and maternity services at **Banbury's Horton** hospital (*Eye* 808) despite widespread public and professional opposition. The Horton is the only general hospital within a 25-mile radius, and the proposed diversion of emergencies to Oxford's **John Radcliffe (JR)** hospital could result in fatal rush-hour delays. The JR itself is unlikely to be able to cope with any extra influx without substantially more resources — a glut of pre-Christmas emergency admissions and the closure of 26 beds in a cost-cutting exercise reduced the hospital to the point of closure, leaving casualties to wait far longer than John Major's 30-minute patient's charter guarantee.

● MANAGERS at **North Middlesex NHS trust** have also had trouble getting to grips with the patient's charter, which decrees that all operations should be done within two years, with a maximum of two cancellations. One man has had his varicose vein operation cancelled nine times in 3½ years and is still awaiting confirmation of his proposed cancellations in 1993. Chief executive Dr David Hirst explained: "We do not have any money to fulfil that part of the charter."

● AT **LISTER** hospital, part of the **North Hertfordshire NHS trust**, a patient was told last September that her prolapse would be repaired within eight weeks. However, when it transpired that the "FH" on her outpatient card to signal that her GP is a fundholder had been printed *in erratum*, she was given a revised admission date — "sometime in 1994".

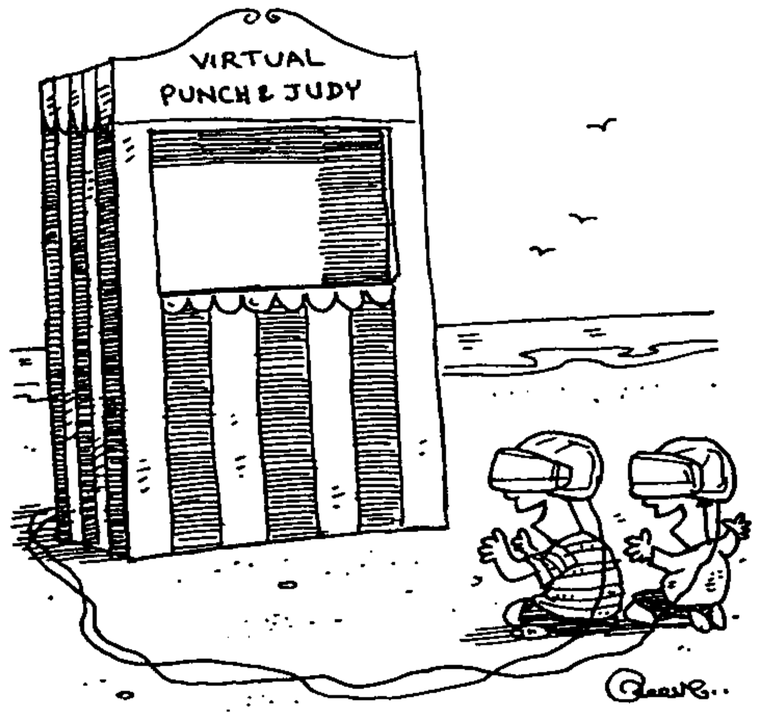
● **HEREFORD County** and **General** hospitals have joined the ever-increasing list of hospitals offering preferential services to fundholding GPs (*Eye* 809) because their district health authority has run out of cash with a third of the year still to go.

● SURGICAL house-officers at **London's Whittington** hospital recently submitted their duty roster to medical staffing, safe in the knowledge that their contracts guarantee that the hospital provides locum cover for holidays. Imagine their surprise when the roster was returned completely altered, ensuring that none of their holidays coincided with nights on call. No locums will now be employed.

● IN **COVENTRY**, the future of the **Coventry and Warwickshire** and **Gulson** hospitals depends on an architect's report, specially commissioned by the local health authority. Refusing to predict whether the hospitals will close, chief executive David Wallace described the report as "an exercise in space utilization". Meanwhile staff shortages at **Manchester Royal Infirmary** have forced the casualty department to close on several occasions recently, with other hospitals in central and south Manchester following suit.

● DUE to gremlins in the typesetter, M.D.'s copy last issue suggested that Sir Derek Hornby, chairman of Rank Xerox UK, was a non-executive director of Gloucester Royal Hospital Trust. He is not. It is of course his wife, Lady Hornby, who is a director and is, moreover, chairman of the trust.

M.D.



SO FAREWELL then, Sir James Ackers. The blundering chairman of West Midlands regional health authority has finally been forced to quit, just as the *Eye* predicted.

The savings the RHA will make on his £25,000-a-year salary for a three-day week are nothing to what he has cost them — most recently £1.3 million on another hare-brained scheme. But at least he went out on a high note...

Sally Deedes

A READER in Halifax was surprised to be "cold called" at his office one day by a woman telephoning on behalf of the National Children's Homes charity.

The charity was launching a house-to-house collection campaign and would he, she wondered, like to act as the collector for his street?

No, said our reader, explaining that he didn't know his neighbours and, furthermore, his working routine made it very difficult for him to call at a reasonable hour. Despite his repeated refusals, the woman did not want to take no for an answer. A couple of weeks later the collection material arrived through the letterbox.

Our reader promptly put it in the bin, concerned by such high-pressure methods. Calling someone at work with no previous history of fund-raising and using hard-sell tactics was, he felt, wholly inappropriate. It seemed the woman caller was more interested in getting a quota of collectors rather than ensuring they would do the job properly.

What concerned him more, however, was that there was no follow-up. He had been sent a package, including a badge which entitled him to collect money on the charity's behalf, but no one ever contacted him to ask what had happened to the money. He could easily have done the rounds, pocketed the lot and no one would have known.

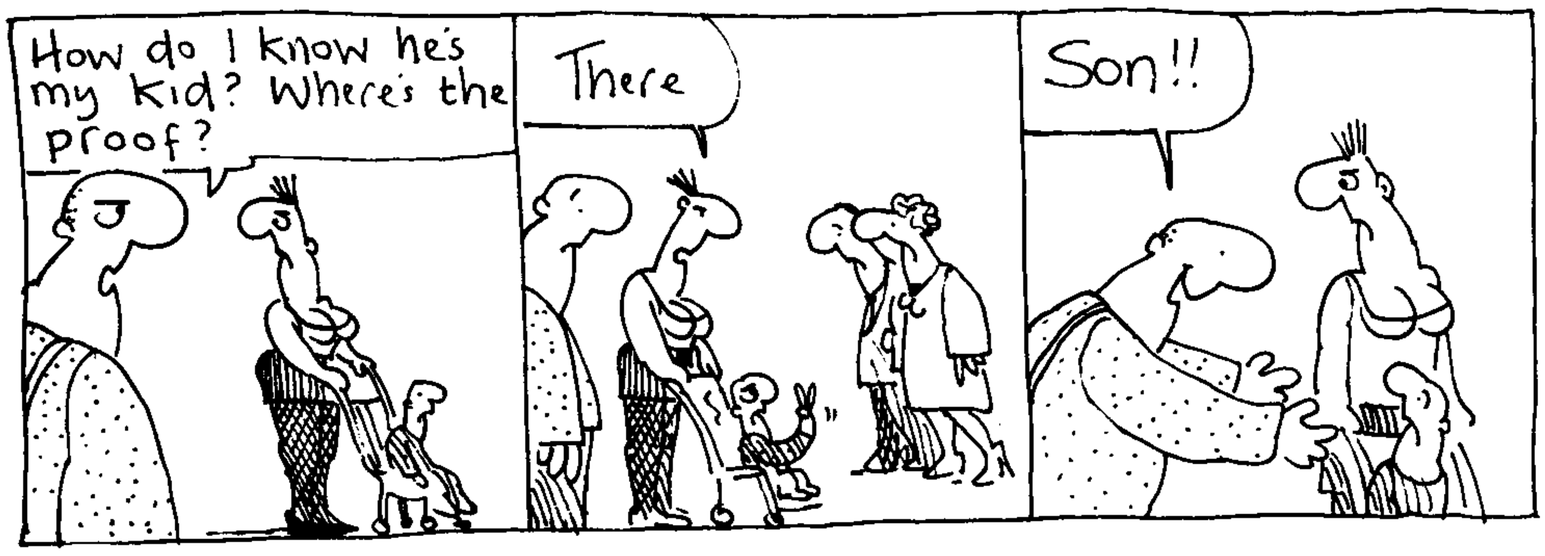
He wrote the charity's London offices saying that his caller, he felt, had a target and was determined to meet it no matter how uncooperative her victim. A reply came from Tom White, the chief executive of NCH, who explained that collectors were asked to visit around 40 homes — which "limits the amount of money that could be lost should fraud take place".

Mr White added: "We have follow up procedures which eliminate the possibility of fraud. A set number of envelopes are sent out so that we can monitor the situation quite well."

Since the would-be collector has to this day had no follow-up call or letter this did not reassure him.

The letter ended by saying that the charity did its research as closely as possible, but "as requested we have removed your name and address from our mailing list and I am sorry that you feel unable to continue supporting us any more." Since our reader had never supported the charity in the first place, this final statement was as curious as the initial phone call.

HUSBAND



CABLES: BANKOSHAFT
A Subsidiary of BCCI Holdings [Luxembourg] S.A.

Letters

Zip code

Sir,

I enjoyed Bookworm's piece on William Rees-Mogg's PICNICS ON VESUVIUS *in* EYE *810. In using the phrase "unzip a condom", I think Rees-Mogg must have had in mind the advertising slogan of some 25 years ago, "unzip a banana". It probably takes this length of time for an idea from popular culture to percolate into the Rees-Mogg consciousness.*

Yours faithfully,
V.P. ROWE,

London NW11.

A wing and a prayer

Sir,

As project manager of our design team for the British Pavilion at EXPO 92 I was thrilled to read yet another accolade has been bestowed on the building!

Having also been responsible for a significant portion of Robert Venturi's Sainsbury Wing I can claim what is possibly the unique achievement of having worked on the winning project for two years in a row. Can any other readers match this?

As you can imagine my bid for the hat-trick is on the drawing board even as I write!

Yours faithfully,
DAVID HADDEN,

Ove Arup & Partners, London W1.

Lookalike

Purcell

Lane

Sir,

I wonder if any of your readers have noticed the remarkable resemblance between England's greatest composer, Henry Purcell, and England's greatest film critic, Anthony Lane? Are they, by any chance, related?

Yours etc.
PETER PARKER,

London E17.

Eye score

Sir,

Within weeks of Piloti's spotlight on Paisley the High Street buildings which lay a derelict eyesore for ten years have been demolished. Also the two car parks in Oakshaw Street are currently being refurbished although their temporary closure at this time has naturally enraged shoppers and town-centre retailers.

As usual Renfrew district council's "improvements" result in the commission of its habitual sins — demolition and fouling up the traffic.

Yours etc.,
G. MORISON,

Paisley.

Fair play

Sir,

In its account of the past destruction of fine architecture in Edinburgh Nooks & Corners, in your Christmas issue, can be applauded; however, Piloti then seems to steer a rather wayward course and to have, perhaps, partaken of a quasi-official red herring.

Of course Playfair's masterpiece must be repaired, and urgently. Of course sense and justice should prevail in deciding any change of use. But why confound these two issues? First things first, the delay has lasted long enough.

Could the real reasons for this delay to repairs being started have more to do with the uncertainties surrounding the future of the Property Services Agency than any deliberations between contending parties?

Yours faithfully,
PETER STANDEN,

Edinburgh.

0% Prof

Sir,

In your bumper Christmas issue of 18 December, you mistakenly reported that I was a Professor, a former Sellafield scientist and reactor designer — thanks for the academic title but no thanks for the other two somewhat doubtful accolades.

Yours,
JOHN H. LARGE,

Large & Associates, London SE18.

Coal banker

Sir,

*Perhaps some seasonal revelry loosened your correspondent's grip on the facts (*EYE *810).*

I was in fact appointed Chairman and a director of Johnson Matthey plc ***as a result*** *of the difficulties of Johnson Matthey Bankers. I put into effect the rescue operation for Johnson Matthey plc devised, necessarily in haste, with the help of the Bank of England after the Bank had agreed to take over Johnson Matthey Bankers. I was not until 3rd October 1984 a director of Johnson Matthey plc and had no connection whatsoever with Johnson Matthey Bankers.*

I became involved because Charter Consolidated, of which I was at the time Deputy Chairman and Chief Executive, held a 24% shareholding. I took up the Chairmanship of Johnson Matthey plc because of the risk that, as a result of the sudden revelation that JMB was insolvent, it too could become insolvent — and because I was convinced that it was a fundamentally good business and shareholders and employees would benefit from its survival. The rescue, turnaround and subsequent performance of the business were successful.

It is stretching credulity to link JMB's problems with the BCCI scandal. And Standard Chartered Bank is, contrary to your report, entirely unrelated to Charter Consolidated.

Yours faithfully,
J.N. CLARKE,

British Coal Corporation, London SW1.

The last Noel

Sir,

When the inevitable inquiry looks for the cause of the Boxing Day riots at Reading Gaol, I hope they will take into account the fact that the disturbances began in the recreation area, at 7.15pm. Showing on BBC1 at the time was NOEL'S CHRISTMAS HOUSE PARTY.

If this was a case of one criminal act causing another, I hope the courts will not be unduly harsh on prisoners, who appear to have suffered undue provocation already.

Yours,
DAVID WHITE,

Reading.

Sweet

Sir,

I would like to see the return of your Ad Nauseam column. I would also like to win £10 and get my name in your organ.

Therefore I would like to nominate the Cadbury's Inspirations advert as a blatant copy of the set and theme of Hitchcock's REAR WINDOW.

Yours impoverishedly,
RICHARD HARRISON,

Stoke-on-Trent.

Base camp

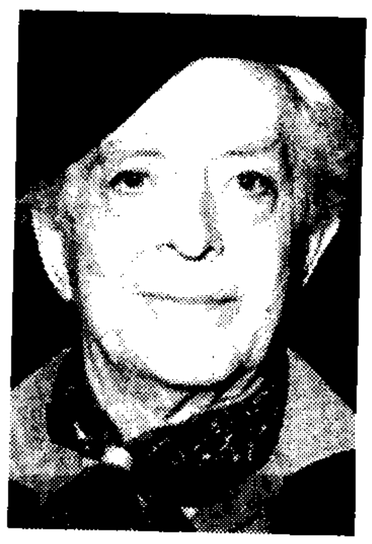
Sir,

*I am writing in response to your article DIE TV (*EYE *810). Your correspondent states that the US marines didn't come ashore on a weekend so as not to clash with US baseball games back home on TV. My guess is that they probably did want to interrupt the baseball but couldn't wait until April when it starts up again having finished many weeks before Operation "Restore Hope". I'm only telling you this because there's nothing on TV, baseball or otherwise. Er... that's it.*

Yours faithfully,
NIGEL LINDSAY,

Beckenham, Kent.

Lookalike



Hickson

Crisp

Sir,

On coming across these two photographs — one of Joan Hickson (alias Miss Marple) and the other of Quentin Crisp — I wonder could they somehow be related?

EITHNE RYAN,

London SW3.

I-SPY

Submitted by E. Strobes. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

God smacked

Sir,

In response to Ms Sheldon's damning you all to the nether regions, I feel obliged to point out that a God who needs protection from "abuse" by human lawmakers must be a bit of a pansy ("Ooh I don't like the way I've been drawn by that Michaelangelo bitch, he's got my hair all wrong") and certainly not the magnificent king, omnipotent Lord and all powerful Creator that we've been brought up to believe in.

As a Christian myself (and a Steve Bell fan) I think the only crime your cover committed was that it was gratuitously offensive to the Conservative party, in particular to the Virgin Maggie, who is held in great awe and reverence by members of this weird religious sect.

As for offending Moslems, if you need any tips on doing so, I'm sure Ms Sheldon and her cohorts can offer you some. After having read some of the vile rubbish being printed about Islam by "Christians" I've come to the firm conclusion that they're the experts in that field.

Yrs oh so deeply offended,
ALAN PAGE,
Oldbury Warley, W Mids.

Halo!

Sir,

I write to complain about your Christmas issue's coloured cover. I object to the blatant blasphemy. It is in appalling taste and lacking in wit or good humour. I consider it to be insulting to any Christian.

Had the combined talents of the SUN *and* VIZ *been asked to design a Christmas cover, not even these masters of vulgarity and tastelessness could have matched your disgusting effort.*

Yours faithfully,
BASIL ROOKE LEY,

London NW5.

Christmas sinners

Sir,

If Moyra Sheldon (Letters, EYE *810) was so affected by what she saw as the blasphemous cover of that magazine why did she either buy it or read it?*

And as far as the remark about your actions being different if it was a Moslem country that would be true only to the extent that in your articles criticising the government the editor and contributors to Eye would have been arrested and put in prison for political comment.

Yours etc,
DARREN GOODWIN,

Porth, Mid Glamorgan.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"The drought which has plagued Manchester United all season now seems to have evaporated."
JAMES REEVES, Piccadilly Radio
(John Butler)

"Ian Snodin, who played as one of a three-man back four in the first half..."
RON JONES, Radio 5
(Martin Winstone)

"He [Frank Bruno] has a lot of fans out there, and I have a lot of fans out there, and they both want to see it go ahead."
LENNOX LEWIS, BBC1
(Christine Hobbs)

"There's a very sad-looking Wattana, but you'd never know to look at his face."
TED LOWE, BBC1
(John Sharp)

"He'd no alternative but to make a needless tackle..."
PAUL ELIOT, Channel 4
(Gordon Dangerfield)

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN

Letter from Brussels

from Our Own Correspondent

DESPITE the arrival of the single European market on 1 January, nothing has changed here in the federal capital. Bloated Eurocrats continue to consume vast quantities of the local delicacy, mussels, while playing the local sport — overseeing massive frauds perpetrated in the common agricultural policy (CAP) support payment system.

The court of auditors, weary of keeping an eye on the European Commission, has all but thrown in the towel: "Our agricultural production aid system suffers from serious flaws which cannot be corrected within a reasonable timescale nor at a reasonable cost," said its annual report.

After fiddling with the aid system for 20 years, the commission, far from controlling it, has become enmeshed in bureaucratic bungling as more and more farmers, with the connivance of national governments, hijack the CAP gravy train.

Member countries, with some exceptions, are not exactly forthcoming in confessing their frauds. Despite the enormous past crimes perpetrated in such countries as Italy and Greece, these two barely figured on the court's list of frauds and irregularities reported to it by member states in 1991.

Italy, which once "lost track" of 11 trillion lira of community industrial aid (about £5.35 billion) under the labyrinthine law of the Region of Sicily, detected and declared only 25 CAP irregularities. Greece, which only notified 34, left the court totally confused as to payments made to its two official bodies responsible for controlling tobacco and cotton. Vast sums poured into their accounts vanished without trace. Moreover, the monthly accounts of Digadep, which hands out money in Greece to agricultural producers, were unreliable, and there were huge differences in the amounts they had declared to the commission and those in their own accounting records.

Naturally you Brits headed the list of self-confessed transgressions, with a total of 223 cases of fraud or irregularity in excess of 10,000 ECU (£8,500). But that is not because you are more corrupt than the rest of us. It is simply because as a nation of hyper-obedient anal retentives you love to play by the rules. In the rest of Europe we play differently — simply ignoring or turning a blind eye to the petty laws and regulations that don't suit us or our farmers.

In Ireland, for example, notorious for its past colourful inventiveness of "homing" pigs and cattle and eel rustlers, they confessed to just two misdemeanours in 1991.

In the UK you had difficulty controlling your sheep count after the annual premiums became payable at the full rate for a maximum of 1,000 sheep in less-favoured areas and 500 in others. Most large producers have organised themselves into groups so they avoid being paid anything less than the maximum for their entire flocks. In one instance six shepherds, each owning no more than eight sheep, submitted a claim in association with a limited company for 6,024 sheep. Even though a pernickety UK official detected the anomaly and allowed only 1,000 sheep on the ground that the arrangement of the group was only for the purpose of circumventing the headage limit, the group appealed to Brussels — and received full payment!

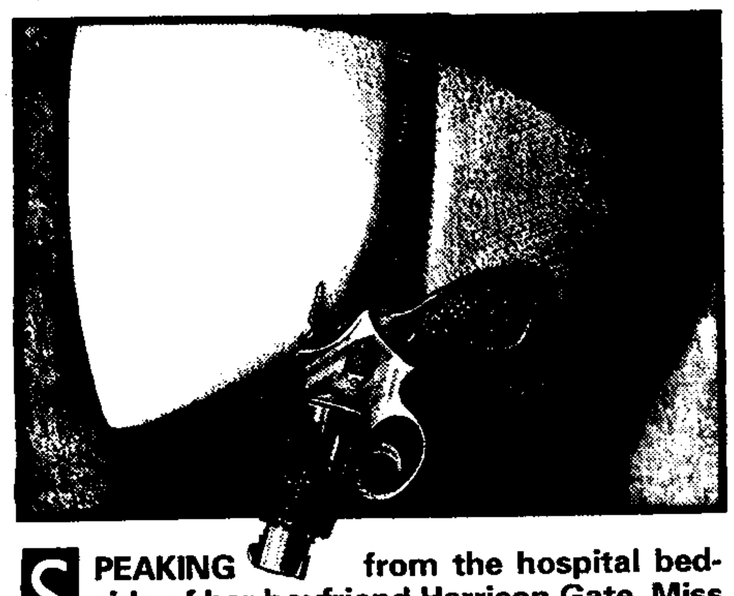
The Scottish Milk Marketing Board showed greater laxity in inadvertently destroying the only documentary evidence of payments made in administering its yearly milk quotas and levies. To simplify matters, the court asked for a computer tape of the audited transactions for the UK between October 90 and April 91, but this arrived after the external trade division's audit.

A supplementary bookkeeping tape was requested in October 1991, but only arrived in January 1992, in a different format from the first. It was, therefore, "impossible to reconcile either the two tapes with each other or the second tape with the declaration."

But who cares? The commission itself kept three different stock control inventories on three separate computer systems, none of which interfaced with the other. As the court concluded of the audits carried out by member states: "Useful information is rarely provided and cannot, in every case, be used to judge their effectiveness."

TRUE STORIES

CHRISTOPHER LOGUE



Bert Kitchen

SPEAKING from the hospital bedside of her boyfriend Harrison Gate, Miss Willis David said: "It never crossed my mind that Harrison would become difficult on our first date but, as I had just bought my .22 pistol in its lacy thigh-holster, I thought no harm could come from wearing it. As it turned out, Harrison and I got along very well, as a result of which the pistol went off in its holster and the bullet went through his foot. I doubt if I shall be wearing the holster again, but this has got nothing to do with some people saying that lacy holsters are insulting to women."

RELEASED from the "romantic log-cabin hideout" on Monday morning, Mr Wolfgang Polsta explained to the police who had been looking after his children: "My wife and I decided to have a Highwayman Holiday. For £480 you stay overnight in the rooms above a gambling saloon and the next day, while travelling by stagecoach between Hesse's 'Dodge City' and 'Boot Hill', you are geld up, robbed and kidnapped by authentically dressed desperadoes. All this happened as promised, but someone forgot to tell the Holiday staff that they had doublelocked us into the log-cabin hideout where we spent Sunday night with two of the desperadoes."

IN a statement issued by his solicitor, Mr Kingly Chingola Jr, the son of the well-known herbalist of the same name, said: "The charge that my father and I brought the President of our country into contempt is wrong. My father has made a traditional aircraft out of forest leaves. When he heard that President Nyirenda could not attend an international conference because the government lacked funds, he offered to place the aircraft at the President's disposal. The aircraft flies by day as well as by night. The only reason they have charged me and not my father is that he is in the cabin of Zambia One at this very moment and beyond the arm of the law."

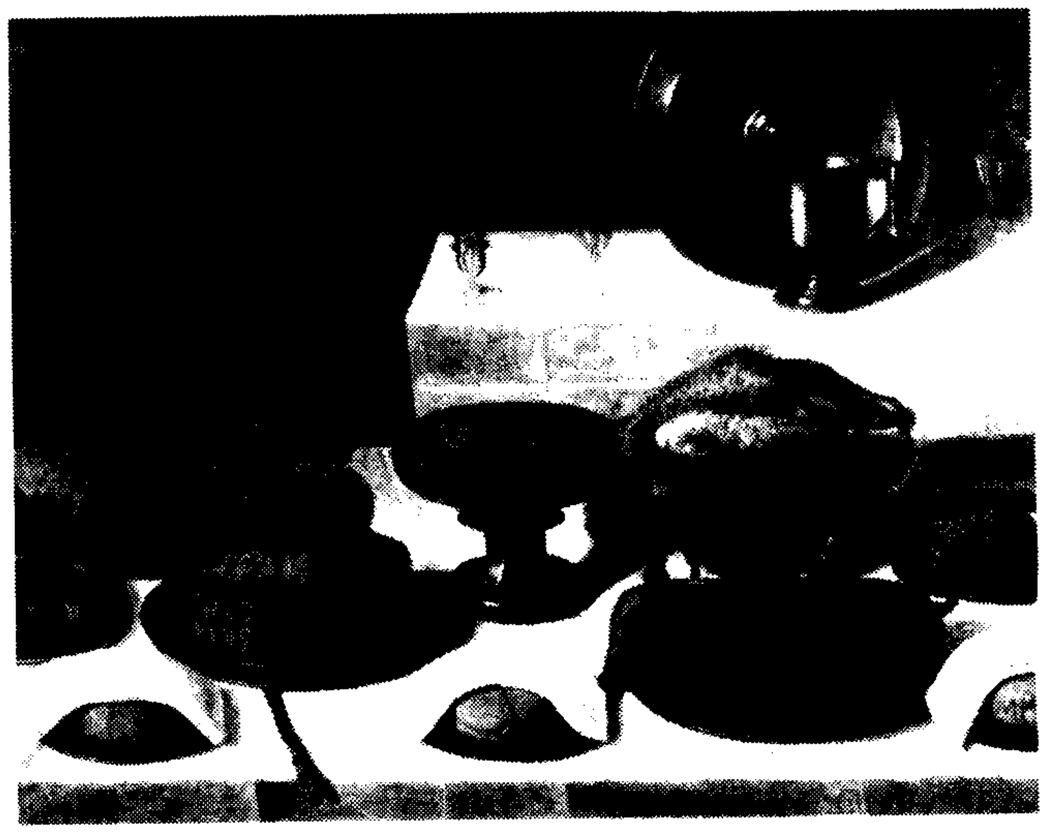
RESPONDING to the attacks on her Mound sculpture by "certain local councillors", Ms Shelly Sacks said: "The Mound is formed of seven tons of clay blackened with carbon. People of all ages began to visit the Stoke-on-Trent Sculpture Court with thought strips of white cloth on which they had written their ideas for the future and attached them by vegetable oil to the Mound, so turning it into a thought-bank for a new society. The Mound was rubbed repeatedly with fat to prevent it drying out. One visitor sat with us while we rubbed and cried as she read out a poem written in response to the Mound. The local councillors failed to stir up the latent mistrust and contempt many have for contemporary art."

TOLD BY a local *thought-doctor* that their eldest son's poor condition was a result of their own long lives and that his cure depended on their giving the doctor their £50 savings, Mr and Mrs Chen Changren, aged 73 and 70 respectively, of Hong'an County, Hubei, killed themselves, leaving the money to the invalid.

INFORMATION: Women & Guns 11.11.92; Esslinger Zeitung 19.11.92; Zambia Weekly Post 17.8.92; Artists' News Letter, December 1992; China Daily 5.9.92. MONITORS: Brendan J. O'Byrne, A. Bluhm, Adam Lethbridge, Anon, Michael Grsovenor Myer.

SAINSBURY'S IN NEW PRICE WAR

by **Brian January Sewell**



IN A dramatic move last night Sainsbury's announced that they were slashing prices right across the board — and that included their branch at the National Gallery.

Bargain hunters at London's Sainsbury Wing discovered the following sensational reductions:

DUCCIO. Was £7 million. *NOW* £6,999,999!

PIERO DELLA FRANCESCA. Was £27 million. *NOW* £28 million!

WARHOL'S CAN OF SOUP. Was 57p. *NOW* 56½p!

Sewell-By Date

Says art critic Sister Wendy Beckett: "I'd go for a still life if I were you. Where else can you get a pheasant, a ham, a bowl of apples, 3 oranges and a pomegranate for less than £33 million?"

The Secret Diary of John Major aged 47¾

New Year's Day

Today is perhaps the most important day of the year so far. Oh yes. We have been preparing for it for a not inconsiderable number of years, and now at last it is finally here! I mean of course the Single European Market. Last night I stayed up nearly all night to light a special commemorative beacon in my garden to mark the great event, but unfortunately the fire-lighters were damp. We eventually got it alight with the help of a can of petrol and some copies of the Maastricht Treaty which my wife Norman put on the fire without asking me. I was in no small measure irritated as I had been hoping one day to read them.

Later when we were in bed enjoying a cup of low-fat Horlicks, Norman asked me what the new Single European Market meant. "You will see, next time you go to the airport," I told her. "From now on instead of red and green channels, there will also be a blue one." "You mean like your biros?" she said, and turned out the light.

Friday

Mr Lamont came in very late for the Cabinet meeting this morning, looking tired and not inconsiderably unshaven. For some reason he was carrying two very large plastic bags bearing the logo "L'Hypermarché Threshers, Calais (M. Jean Onanugu, Proprietaire)".

"I have been carrying out in-depth investigation into the new Shingle Market, prime minister," he said in a rather slurry voice, which I imagined was his attempt at a French accent. He then fell rather heavily on Mrs Bottomley, demanding a bit of "care in the community". It was all rather mysterious, and I was very grateful when Mr Waldegrave came in with the tea and a selection of Danish pastries, which he said he hoped might remind me of my homeland. For some reason everyone laughed and began singing "Wonderful Copenhagen" which I later discovered from my new Daily Telegraph 1993 Wall Map is the capital of Bosnia.

Saturday

While we were having breakfast this morning, we heard on the news on Classic FM (which Norman likes) that the top New Year's Honour this year has gone to David Frost. "What a wonderful coincidence," said Mr O'Donnell when I told him later, "because you are doing an interview with him tomorrow."

Sunday

This morning is my big day! An interview with Sir David Frost. The car from the BBC picked me up at half-past-four when it was still considerably dark. When I arrived I was asked to sit in a corner of the studio while Sir David read out bits from the newspaper. This was very useful because it gave me the answers to a lot of the questions he eventually asked me. For instance there was a very interesting article by Mr Hurd in the Telegraph saying that we are about to invade Bosnia, or it might have been Iraq.

At last, after a lady had told us about the weather, Sir David himself came over to lead me to the low settee at the foot of his throne. It all went very well in my judgement and I managed to look firm and confident without saying anything to upset anyone. When I got home, I asked Norma how the interview had gone, and she said I had been very good, although she had not managed to see it herself.

Monday

It seems that my interview with Sir David has been a notable success! Apparently I made a very daring initiative in suggesting that America and Japan should join the European Monetary System. Mr Hurd rang me and said in his toffee-nosed way, "If you looked at that map I gave you, you twit, you would see that Japan and America are not in Europe." Obviously he wishes he had thought of the idea first!

Tuesday

In our Cabinet meeting Mrs Bottomley expressed concern about the mentally ill being allowed to roam the streets. She quoted the case of a man in his fifties wandering around Paddington looking for an off-licence and shouting: "I see green shoots all over the place."

Everyone laughed, which did not seem to be a very caring attitude to this problem.

"Shouldn't he be in hospital?" I asked Virginia in my concerned voice. "There aren't any," said Mr Waldegrave as he collected up the empty tea-cups. "Don't you remember, you told me to close them all down?" There was more laughter. We are certainly in high spirits nowadays.

Wednesday

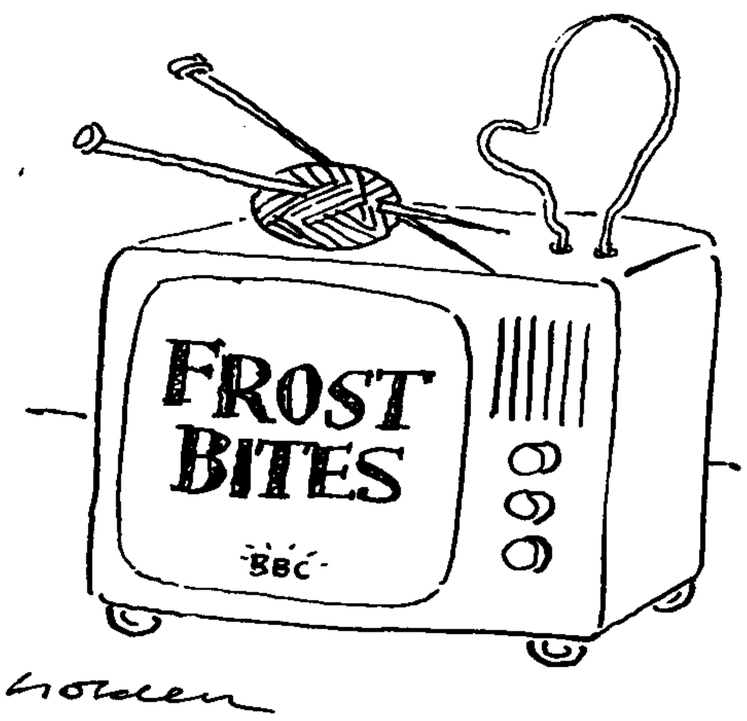
There is more good news. The Labour Party is on its last legs! Mr O'Donnell told me this the day before it appeared in the *Daily Mail*! Who says I am not ahead of events? Apparently they had a hot tip from Central Office.

Now we can forge ahead with our brilliant new Budget ideas. Norma says we have to raise some money fast and suggested putting up taxes.

"Surely," I said, "that is the Labour Party's idea?"

"They are utterly discredited," replied Norma, "so they won't need it any more."

You have to admire Norma



sometimes. He is still capable of flashes of not immeasurable brilliance.

He told me he was so confident about the economy he was going off to London Zoo to feed the lions.

THAT CALCUTT REPORT IN FULL

HERE are the recommendations made by the Prime Minister to Sir David Cutitallout QC:

1. Don't mention my friend David Mellor ever again.

2. Don't mention my friend Mr Lamont either.

3. Leave the Royals alone.

4. Er...

5. That's it.

Signed

John Major (47¾)

pp Himself

EXCLUSIVE TO ALL NEWSPAPERS

WOMAN IN THE EYE

AS from this morning she is the world's most important woman. Yet few people outside the media have any idea who she is. But she is now in charge of everything at the BBC. Colleagues describe her as "intensely able", "extremely able" and "supremely able", adding "Can we have a job please?"

Her achievements are legion. At Channel 4 she was described as "very able indeed" and was even then tipped to become the world's most important woman. Before that she worked on the *Guardian*, where she was described as "terrifically able" and colleagues said of her: "Who are you talking about?"

Make no mistake, Britain's future is in her hands. From today she is the world's *(contd p. 94)*

"It's not gravitas – he's dead"

LABOUR LEARNS CLINTON LESSON

by Our Political Staff **Clint Eastwood**

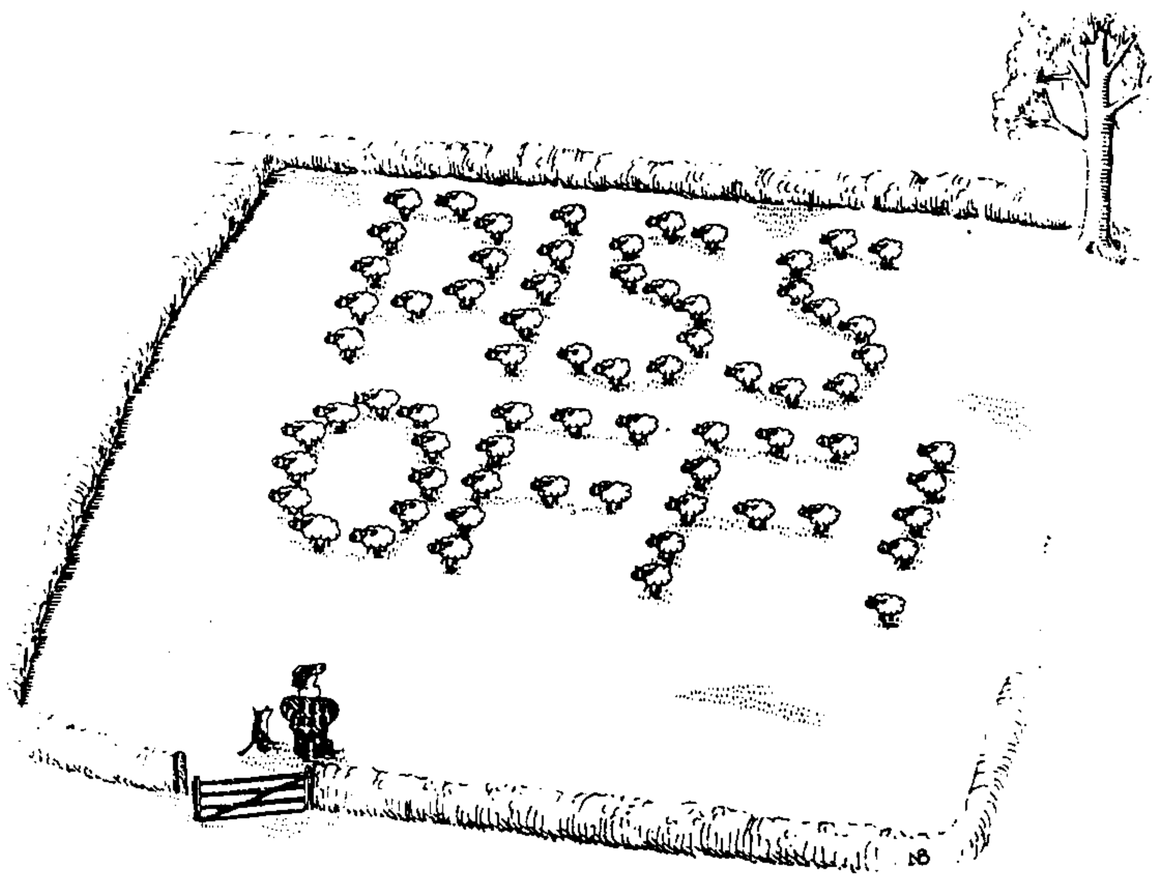
THE Labour Party agreed yesterday that they could benefit from the electoral triumph of Governor Bill Clinton.

At a specially convened "Think-In" at the Chorley Wood Happy Eater, a number of Scottish men in suits described their recent holidays in America with the help of slides.

Afterwards Labour leader John Smith described the exercise as "enormously helpful in pinpointing the way ahead for Labour.

"From what we have seen, the party needs an energetic leader who comes across well on TV chat shows. He should have a glamorous wife with her own career and radical opinions about important issues. He should have two children, speak with a regional accent, and come from a humble background."

After much discussion it was agreed that Neil Kinnock would immediately be invited to take over as leader of the Labour Party.



That Frost-Major Interview That Everyone Is Writing About And No One Saw

Sir David: Hullo, good morning and thank you for my knighthood.

Man With Glasses: Thank you for inviting me on your programme.

Sir Frost *(reading autocue)*: Lean forward and smile.

Major: All the classic elements are now in place for a sustained interview to occur.

Sir Frost: My first question, prime minister, is what is a suitable question to ask you first?

Man In Glasses: Now don't try and catch me out!

Frost: Super. Ha. Ha. Ha. No but seriously (peering at clipboard) — is it true that you were born in Copenhagen?

Major: You know, Sir David, I read a lot about myself in the papers which I can't believe. Only today they were saying that your knighthood had something to do with this programme.

Sir David: Ha. Ha. Ha. Super.

Major: Can I turn now to the subject of the economy? I want to make it clear that we shall go back into the ERM as and when the conditions are right.

Sir Frost: Can I probe a little deeper? What's your name?

Major *(flustered)*: The Princess of Wales would be entirely within her constitutional rights to become Queen. She is the king's husband, and nothing anyone says can alter that fact.

Lord Frost: And now here are Millicent Martin and Lance Percival to sing a song about Mr Beeching's plan to axe the railways.

(Elderly couple come on with small guitar)

Percival & Martin *(for it is they)*:
British Rail is for de chop
All our trains are going to stop
Mr Beeching wield his axe
Soon there will be no more tracks

Chorus:
Bye bye railway cha-cha
(repeat several times until end of programme)

(Viewer [John Birt] turns off)

On Other Pages

TV Frostie forces Major to admit "I will rejoin ERM" p.1

"I am no Dane" — Angry Major lashes Frost p.2

Major weeps under Frost grilling p.3

Stop this Trial By Tv writes Paul Johnson p.8

Unfunny cartoon of oil tanker by Garland p.8

Even worse one by his son p.9

Thribb on GCSE literature list

by Our Education Staff **Lunchtime O'Level**

PRIVATE EYE poet E.J. Thribb is one of many contemporary authors to be included in education minister John Patten's new compulsory list of "classic texts" to be read by Britain's 14-year-olds.

Alongside Shakespeare, school students must now study Thribb's *In Memoriam: Roy Plomley*, a tribute to the creator of *Desert Island Discs*.

"It is important", said Mr Patten, "that children should relate to English literature across a broad spectrum of styles and genres, if our cultural tradition is to be handed over to the Euro-citizens of tomorrow."

Those new GCSE texts in full

Chaucer: *Prologue to Canterbury Tales* (first two lines).

Laurie Lee: passage from *Cider With Jeff*, describing evening spent in Coach and Horses getting drunk with colourful Soho personality Jeffrey Bernard.

Keats: *Ode To A Nightingale* (first two lines, or as much as you can manage).

Winston Spart: *Smash The White Pigs Now* (from *Graffiti On Broadwater Farm*).

William Wordsworth: *Daffodils* (title only to be attempted).

Philip Larkin: *Fuck the lot of them* (extract from *The Collected Diaries*).

Shakespeare: "To be or not to be" (from Hamlet cigar commercial).

Jeannette Winterson: "Why I Am The Greatest Writer Of This Or Any Other Age" (interview in *Guardian*).

Tennyson's *In Memoriam (Shome mishtake shurely? Ed)*

CRICKET'S TOP COUPLE TO SEPARATE

by Our Man In Delhi
Allan Lamb Korma

IT came as a great surprise to no one yesterday that the sport's best-loved couple had agreed on a "non-amicable separation".

Run Out

England captain Graham Gooch and his good-looking blond partner are to split.

Said Graham: "It wasn't working. I wanted to play cricket all the time and David didn't."

David Gower, meanwhile, told a different story. "I wanted our relationship to continue but Graham wouldn't have it. I gave him an ultimatum — choose me or it's all over."

Bombay Duck

Friends of the couple were reported to be very sad. "They should have stayed together for the sake of the runs," said one.

"The worst thing", said another, "is that this business has stopped Graham concentrating on the most important thing in his life — leaving his wife."

"Carry your computer games home from school?"

The Daily TeLEGraph

FRIDAY, JANUARY 15, 1993

Cor! My wife's legs are smashing!

Mrs Conrad Blackstockings (née Amiel)

By the Chairman of the Daily Telegraph Conrad Blackstockings

DON'T let the fashion editors tell you that long skirts are great. 'Cos they're not. You can't see a bird's legs when she's wearing a long skirt. What's the point of that? You ask any bloke, like me, whether they want to see their missus in a long or a short skirt. They'll all tell you "Short one so we can see her legs, Conrad."

So I say (and it's my paper so you'd better print it), I say "Shut up about long skirts all you ceuturiers and fashion venduses *(sub: check spelling)* and give us more pictures of leggy crumpet."

Just to prove what I'm saying is right and all the so-called politically corellated *(sub: check)* people in the fashionable Demi-Mondo *(sub: check)* are talking bunk, just look at this bird I married! She's got a great brain and fabulous legs! So, let's look at them! Imagine them wrapped round you of an evening!! Corrr!!

The Daily TeLEGraph

A bleak outlook

AGAINST the background of the deteriorating situation in war-torn Bosnia, the fragile Somali ceasefire and the virtual collapse of the Middle East Peace Talks, the world as it faces 1993 is looking more unstable than ever.

At home there is more uncertainty, with increasing unemployment and an economy still in the grip of recession and a lack of confidence in both public and private sectors. Rising lawlessness and the failure of previously dependable institutions like the Monarchy have made matters worse.

But amidst all these grave issues, there is surely none more pressing than the tragic attempt of the fashion industry to foist the so-called long skirt upon an unwilling female public. This appalling act of sacrilege, for that is what it is, must be stopped in its tracks, by force if necessary. The UN must insist upon the permanent recognition of the short skirt as the status quo. Mr Boutros Ghali, Lord Owen, President Clinton and John Major must stand firm. They have no greater task this year than the overthrow of the dictators who run the evil fashion empires who seek to *(continued for as long as the Proprietor demands)*

"That's a story that's got legs!"

'Short not long' says legman Black

By Our Media Staff

Jane Thynne-Legs

Daily TeLEGraph supremo Conrad Blacktights, 41, has decreed that in future only "short pieces" will be acceptable in his newspapers.

"Nobody wants to see a great long piece," said the Canadian-born sex-fiend, "except when it is written by myself on the subject of skirts. My wife's pieces are very long and tend to taper off at the end. That's why they're in the *Sunday Times*."

Ms Barbara Amiel is 107.

INSIDE ☐ More Pictures of Legs, Page Three ☐ 20 Things You Never Knew About Legs by Peterborough p. 17 ☐ Obituary: The Long Skirt by Hugh Montgomery-Starbird p. 25 ☐ Health: Short Skirts Make You Live Longer p. 26 ☐ Cartoon by Alegs p. 27

LION TO BE RELEASED INTO THE COMMUNITY

by Our Animal Staff **Zoo Lawley**

MRS Virginia Bottomley today announced that the "disturbed" lion at the centre of the Zoogate Affair had been diagnosed as "wild, dangerous and unpredictable".

"This lion", she said, "is a danger to himself and others and there is only one way to deal with him — release him at once."

The Health Minister assured the public that the community would take care of the lion and that it was the only sensible option in the circumstances.

"We can't just lock him up in some decaying Victorian institution, can we?" she concluded.

A senior government spokesman later clarified her comments, saying: "This way the lion will be able to live independently, perhaps find a job, settle down and live a normal life."

Critics, however, suggested that the whole exercise was merely cost-cutting and that it was cheaper to let the lion roam the streets than to care for it properly in a zoo. One psychiatrist said: "There is no doubt about what we are dealing with here. This is a classic case of mental instability. Mrs Bottomley should be put away for the benefit of society as a whole."

TV HIGHLIGHTS

(ITV) Inspector Morse: The Mystery of the CBE

The crossword-solving, beer-drinking, opera-loving *(Get on with it — Ed)* Inspector Morse is called in to solve the curious case of why actor John Thaw has been given a CBE. The plot thickens when Denis Whately, who plays Sergeant Lewis, gets absolutely nothing, even though he solves most of the cases. Is it because Morse went to Oxford and is a senior officer whereas Lewis is Northern and a mere sergeant? Or is it because John Thaw is about to be in *A Year In Provence*?

After two hours and lots of Mozart, the mystery is solved. John Major is desperate to suck up to anyone popular.

(BBC) The Travel Show (new series)

Anne Greig has been sacked for being too old. She has been replaced by Marmaduke Hussey, the young man who is going places. Join Marmaduke and sidekick Jill Bimbo as they visit Eastbourne, Hove, Worthing, Frinton, and the Executive Toilet on the 7th Floor.

(BBC) Spender (new series)

Jimmy Nail plays tough undercover Director-General John Birt on the trail of a missing £60 million of licence-payers' money. Will he cover it up?

(That's enough TV. Ed.)

(BBC2) Clive James — The Test Card

Clive James replaces the little girl on the test card and sits there all day.

NEW WORDS

ONANUGU
(from Nigerian dialect); n. one who takes blame; fall guy; scapegoat; e.g. "Onanugu to be Deported — Shock" (*Mail on Sunday*, 1993).

KELLNER
n. person who is invariably wrong in his predictions; e.g. "You stupid kellner — you said it would be a nice day and we got soaked" (coll.)

BLUNKETT
vb. int. to waffle; e.g. "He blunketted on all evening" (source — *Hansard*)

BRUNO
n. a traditional pantomime character; e.g. "Enter Bruno *(audience cheers wildly for 10 minutes)*." See also: Botham.

WOGAN
n. living zombie; one of the undead; Irish mythological being; e.g. "Watch out, or the wogan'll get you." (W.B. Yeats, *Noddy and the Goblins*)

"I had that David Icke in the back of the cab once"

NO ONE MURDERED SHOCK

by Our Crime Staff **Bill The**

BRITAIN reeled today from the sensational news that no one had been brutally killed for five minutes. Reporters sat in stunned silence as they received the information from police that there had been no shootings, burnings, knifings, joy-riding fatalities or any other form of violent homicides for a record period of three hundred seconds.

The country was further amazed when it was revealed that there had been no rapes, child molestations or kidnaps for most of the same period.

A police spokesman said: "I cannot explain it. I do not know what this country is coming to. We must believe that this is an isolated outbreak in the more normal pattern of British life in the 'nineties."

EXCLUSIVE *Nigel Pratt-Dumpster*

My scoops of 1992

■ Here are just some of the stories that made my Diary the most-read column in the world in 1992...

Jan 7

■ I reveal exclusively that Viscount Linley is thinking of giving up smoking.

Feb 23

■ I disclose the forthcoming engagement of Simon Leigh-Pemberton, 23, the actor-cousin of the Bank of England Governor, and Tracey Redditch, 19, the presenter of Radio Trent's early morning show *Hello Trenties!*

March 3

■ I shock the world with the news that Lord Linley, the Queen's nephew and 33rd in line to the throne, has now gone five days without a cigarette.

April 14

■ I correctly predict that Consuelo Bastardo, a leading figure on the Buenos Aires polo circuit, will be celebrating his 53rd birthday at Evita's in Covent Garden with his third wife Malvina. The chef tells me he is making a special cake for the occasion!

May 3

■ Everyone is astonished by my revelation that Lord Linley, the brother of Lady Helen Windsor, has been smoking a cigarette at a Covent Garden restaurant. He was guest of honour at the birthday bash for Argentinian playboy Consuelo Bastardo, 57.

June 4

■ To the obvious chagrin of my so-called rivals on various down-market rags, I disclose the sensational news that well-known actor Simon Leigh-Pemberton has returned from his Caribbean honeymoon with Midlands media star Tracey Redditch "in excellent spirits".

July 28

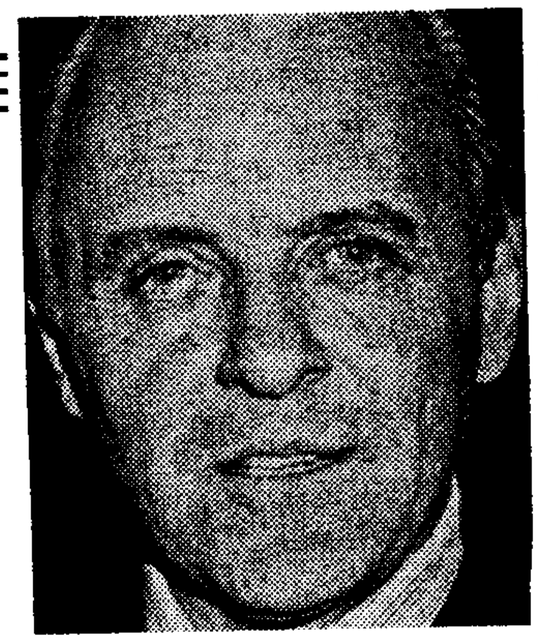
■ I reveal that Viscount Linley, cousin of Prince Wills, heir to the throne of England, may be thinking of visiting fashionable South American hypnotist Malvina Bastardo in an effort to give up his addiction to nicotine. They met, I report, at a birthday party given in London earlier this year to celebrate Senora Bastarda's husband's 59th birthday.

Aug 4

■ I predict that I will be invited to appear on Radio 2 in the near future, replacing the legendary disc jockey/presenter Ron Clingfilm on his popular midnight-3am show *Sleepy Time*.

Sept 3

■ In my Mustique Diary, much to the rage of down-market rivals, I recount spotting Viscount Linley on the beach. Smoking!



Oct 14

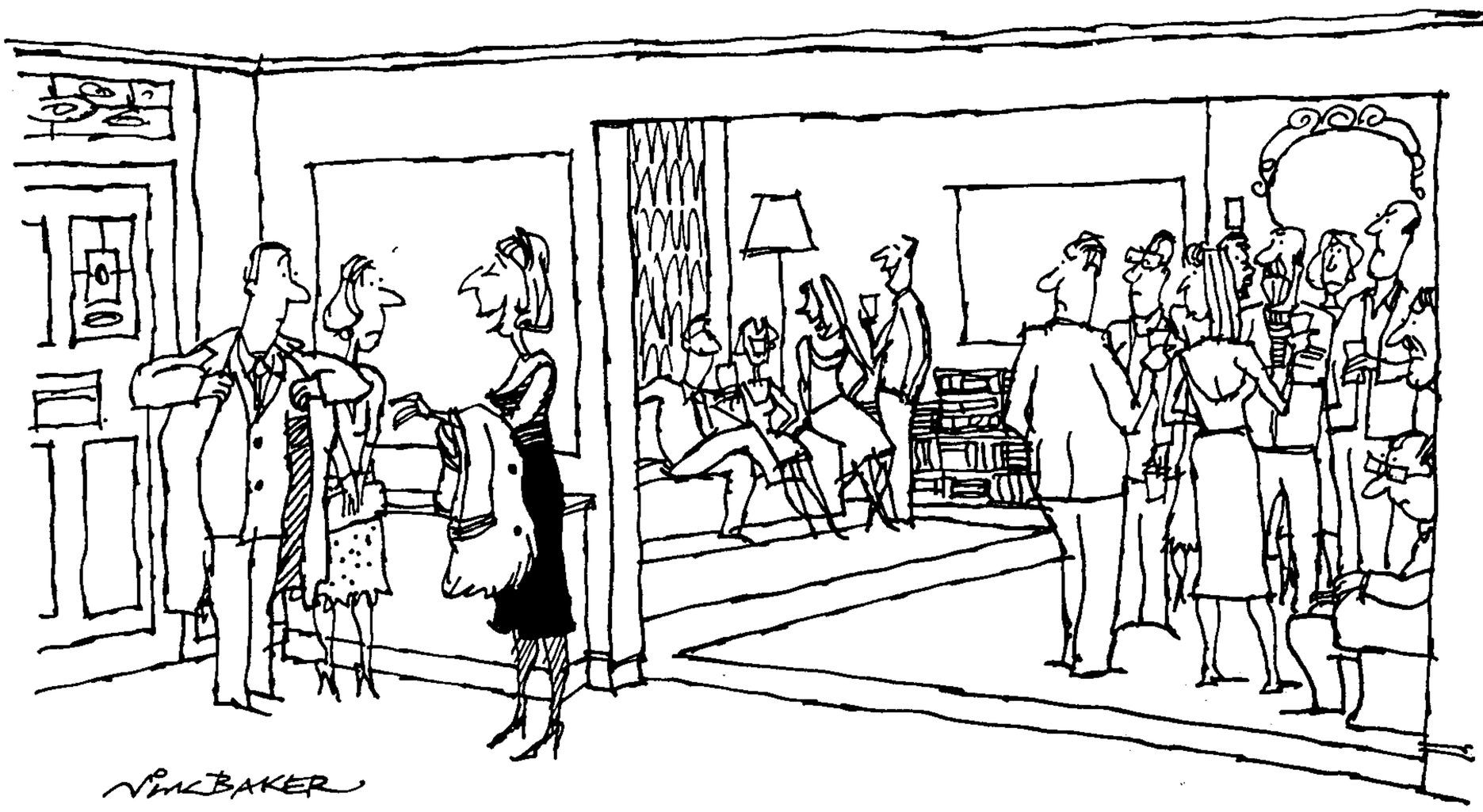
■ To the astonishment of fashionable London, Mario, 47, the long-time chef of chic Covent Garden eaterie Evita's, has walked out in protest against guests smoking between courses. He exclusively assures me, however, that Viscount Linley, 31, cousin of Princess Alice, 91, was not one of the guilty guests who had provoked the biggest furore amongst society diners-out for years.

November 28

■ To the horror of my rivals in the gutter press, I scoop them once again with the news that Simon Leigh-Pemberton, who is no stranger to this column, is to play the part of Prince Bonzo in the pantomime *Puss In Boots* at the Branagh Theatre, Leatherhead. He will share billing honours with TV weatherwoman Suzanne Charlton and Surrey wicket-keeper Kevin Sturrock.

December 24

■ I astonish the world by predicting that tomorrow is Christmas Day.



"Working or non-working?"

GLENDA SLAGG

FLEET STREET'S FUMING FUNSTRESS!

HATS OFF to Princess Margaret!?! So she likes to smoke a fag every five minutes!? Who doesn't?

And she doesn't mind a drop of Scotland's finest?!? Who can blame her? Wouldn't you knock it back and light up if you had to spend Christmas with her bunch of po-faced killjoy relatives?!? At least she's got the guts to get pneumonia, which is more than you can say for the rest of the Windsor wimps!?!?

PRINCESS Margaret — what a wreck?!? No wonder Eighty-a-day Maggie is a-huffin' and a-puffin' at death's door!? Don't you read the papers, Ma'am?!? Smokin's bad for you?!? And so's boozin'!?! Take a tip from Glenda — and I don't mean a filter tip!!? Give 'em up!?! It's time you set an example to the rest of us?!?

MARJE PROOPS — call yourself an Agony Aunt?!! You must be jokin'?! Drop yourself a line, dearie, and ask yourself for some advice!?!

You tell us in your sleazy book that you couldn't face your well-endowed old man with his trousers down!?

Well, some of us girls are not so fussy!?! *(You're fired! Ed)*

Do us a favour, you grisly granny, and get lost!!?!

FIONA ARMSTRONG — she's Glenda's new start-the-day sofa

star?!? OK, so she looks glum!?! Wouldn't you, if you had to sit next to that bloke with the moustache every mornin'?!? Show us your legs, Fifi baby, and give us a grin!!?! That's what Britain gets out of bed for in the morning!?!

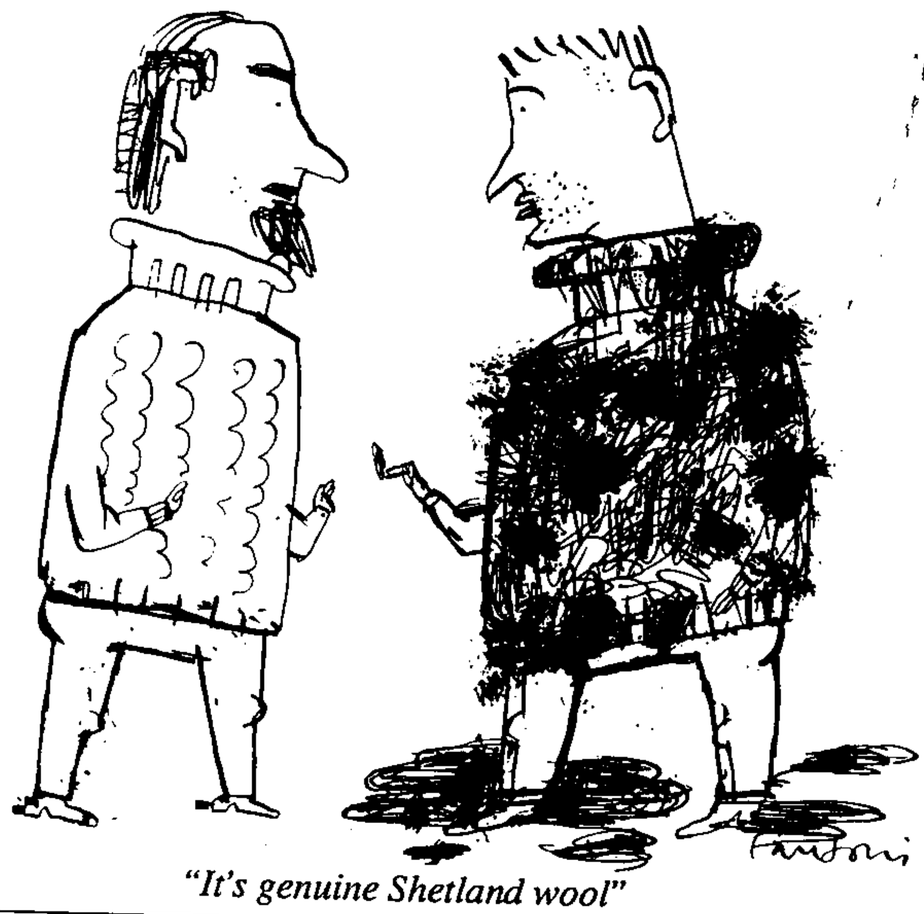
HERE THEY ARE, Glenda's Gorgeous Gladiators!?!

● **GRAHAM GOOCH** — Fancy making a big score round my place now you're *single?!?!* (Geddit?)

● **MICHAEL GREEN** — Carlton TV's Mister Big!?! OK, Thames has gone but I wouldn't Minder bit of Rumpole!?! (Geddit?)

● **LAWRENCE EAGLEBURGER** — Crazy name!? Crazy guy?!?!

Byeee!!



"It's genuine Shetland wool"

New book smears reputation of great war leader

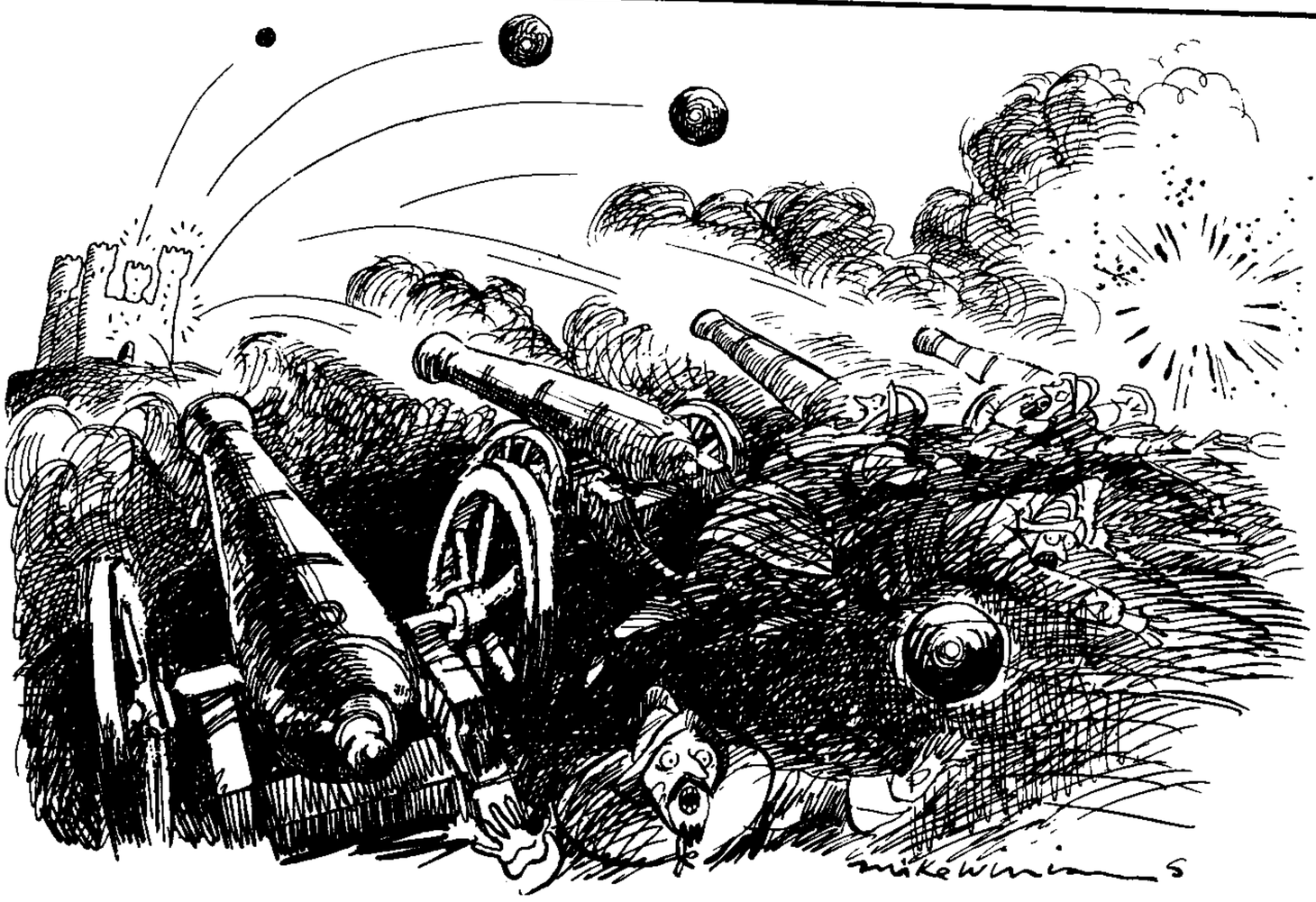
by Our Defence Editor **Brig. J. Trumper-Smythe** (author of *The Smell Of Blood, The Noise Of War, The Guns Of Battle* etc)

A CONTROVERSIAL new book published today claims that, far from being a genius, Mr Alan Clark, the great Gulf War dealer *(shurely 'leader'? W.D.)*, **was a complete lunatic who should never have been entrusted with the job of Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Board of Trade.**

In his book *Clarkhill: The Myth Exposed*, leading historian Prof. Kevin Charmless of the University of New Clinton, claims that Clark prolonged the war with Saddam Hitler by selling him huge quantities of sophisticated weapons.

"If Clark had not been so obsessive in his desire to make money, Saddam would never have won the war, and the whole of human history might have been different," writes Prof. Charmless.

Historians eager to get their name into the papers queued up yesterday to defend Clark against what one of them, Prof. Norman Stone, described as "a most vindictive and cowardly attack on one of our greatest national heroes. He inspired the nation at its darkest hour by flogging lethal weapons to a mad dictator. Mine's a treble, old boy."



"Oh, God! It's a bouncy castle!"

If we are lucky we will see duck boys bringing their ducks home, men massaging their cocks on the road, cow boys taking grass. Yes it is a wonderful experience. Don't miss it during your visit to the island of gods, Bali.

Tunas Indonesia Tours & Travel

POETRY CORNER

In Memoriam
Dizzy Gillespie and
Rudolf Nureyev

So. Farewell
Then

Dizzy Gillespie
Famous jazz
Trumpeter.

You were known
For your
Bulging cheeks.

Rudolf Nureyev.

So were
You.

E.J. Thribb (17½)

St Cake's School

Carlton Term beings today. There are 7 boys left in the school and two pregnant girls. A.P.R. Onanugu (Threshers) is Head of Access. Miss Nicorette Patch (Raffles) is Chancellor's Warden. Mr D.T.I. Matrix-Churchill has left to become head of the Arm Sales Department at Baghdad University, and he will be replaced as Director of the Technology Design Unit by Mr Nintendo Game-Boy. A car boot sale of school equipment will be held on the Headmaster's Lawn on Founder's Day (3 February). Mellors will be held on St Sancha's Day (15 March). There will be a performance of *They Flew To Bruges*, adapted for the stage by Mr Stephen Fry (O.C.). Proopsies will be on 29 March. Tickets from the Bursar, Maj. Slobodan Ethnic-Cleansing, Greater Serbia Lodge. The Old Cakes Lodge (No. 12473) will hold its annual dinner at the GMTV-Pentel Motor Inn, Haywards Heath, Sussex. The Grand Parrot (E.L.B. Tiswold) will reverence the Master Bison (J.P.Q. Phipps-Gorringe) in a ceremony to admit new Tilers.

Great Bores Of Today.

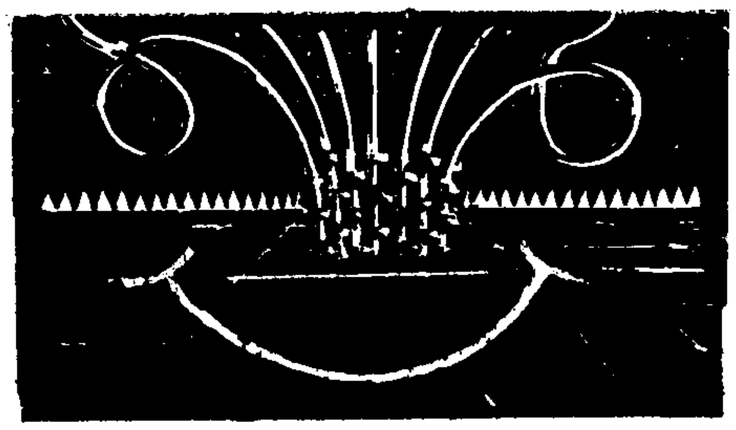
"... I've got one on now it's brilliant I have no cravings whatsoever in fact the smell of other people's cigarettes makes me feel ill no offence look at Princess Margaret they worked out how many she's got through in her life and it's something like 350 million think of that it's unbelievable she should do what I'm doing you put it on your arm just like a plaster and your body gets the nicotine without the damage to your lungs and heart they're not cheap but if you think of what you spend as a smoker it's nothing mind you there's a very good book you can get which has sold millions of copies which says you just have to think of yourself as a non-smoker it worked for this friend of mine in the office but I went for the patch which really does work if I had a cigarette now I'd be dead in a week I wish you'd put that out I can't live with someone who goes on doing that to themselves..."

Celeb

LIGGER

SO HOW WAS YOUR WILD WEEKEND AWAY WITH THE BAND, GARY.
BRILLIANT, MATE. ABSOLUTELY BRILLIANT.
FABULOUS HOTEL. LOTS OF BOOZE AND PLENTY OF BEHAVIOUR GUARANTEED TO KEEP THE TABLOIDS HAPPY....
YOU KNOW THE SCORE. PICKING UP BIRDS... LOTS OF SHAGS... DID ME THE WORLD OF GOOD.
SOUNDS WELL MUCKY...
YEAH BUT MY ENVIRONMENTAL PROFILE'S NEVER BEEN HIGHER.
BLOKE'S SHETLAND MERCY MISSION

DIARY



DAME BARBARA CARTLAND

As frankly one of the most popular members of the Royal Family and the only one let me add who has sold over 10 million copies of my books in Saudi Arabia, it is up to me to argue our cause on television and on the wireless until I am blue in the face.

I do not want to do it, of course I do not, I have much better things to do, but someone has to, so it had better be me.

The British people simply adore their monarchy. They need someone to look up to and they utterly crave the glamour and history of us all.

It is high time someone of my stature — read and loved by thousands of millions, with over 15 million copies sold in Saudi Arabia alone — began to sing the praises of our Marvellous Monarchy.

Prince Charles, for instance. There's plenty to praise there, if only people would quite simply make the effort to look.

He may not be tall. In my day he would have been called a midget or a dwarf, in fact he's not my idea of a Prince at all. He's also as bald as a cricket ball, dithers this way and that rather than just getting on with it, is frankly rather common — I suppose it's all that German blood, poor thing — and was utterly ruined for life by Gordonstoun and is probably queer to boot and his eyes are far too close together, which Englishwomen never like.

But it is simply disgraceful that he should now find himself the target of abuse from people who barely know him. So I hereby call on the nation to join with me in singing his praises, loud and clear, for all the other nations of the earth to envy.

However pathetic and sissy he might be, it is not for us to say so, or it might be the end of the Monarchy. I have written to every single Member of Parliament calling on them to pledge their support for poor Prince Charles, enclosing a postage-paid envelope for a speedy response, headed FREEPOST DWARF.

And what would you replace our marvellous Royal Family with? You answer me that. One would have to find some delightfully well-loved figure, preferably an exceptionally well-bred lady, a Dame perhaps, and with Royal connections, plus a great deal of experience in matters of the heart, a romantic novelist, maybe, or a ceaseless health campaigner, someone who's not afraid to speak her mind, someone with the mind of a seer and the body of a teenager, someone with a daughter ready and willing to take over when she abdicates. Nominations on a postcard, please, to me, Dame Barbara, or to my darling daughter Princess Raine, c/o Buckingham Palace. Petitions, posters, round-robins, etc., also very welcome.

I receive a great many letters from men and women all over the world saying that they want above all to look like me and asking how to go about it.

The secret is to stick to pure honey, lemon rind, scrunched-up Malaysian spiders and Tibetan goose-droppings.

Rub two and a half pints of honey all over your face twice a day, pepper it with lemon rind and then mould the spiders and the goose-droppings to fill an area of circumference six inches all around your eyes.

Many world leaders have followed my advice including Mr Gandhi, President de Gaulle (who was in love with me at the time), President Marcos (who proposed to me twice before breakfast) and President George Brush. And that is what keeps them all looking so young.

And I'll tell you something else.

I sell over 20 million copies of my works every year in Saudi Arabia alone.

A lot of nonsense is spoken these days about world peace by people who should know a great deal better.

President Brush has already had the benefit of my advice. I sent my pamphlet "Barbara Cartland on World Peace" to him, bound in ribbon and have received his personal thanks in return. The same goes for Mr Yeltsnip.

I intent to offer my advice freely to the next President, Mr Clintop, as and when he needs it. He has already made noises in my direction, and like all the others he is a great fan of my books.

I will tell him this.

Women like their men to go to war, preferably in a smart, freshly-laundered uniform. They don't like stay-at-homes one little bit.

Any woman who says differently is lying.

We Englishwomen like to keep the hearth warm, waiting beautifully turned out, with a hot meal in the oven, for our husbands to return from war, perhaps with one or two minor head wounds and the odd scar.

What absolute rubbish to pretend otherwise.

As for these Bosnians and Suburbians and all their simply frightful tiresomeness, I have advised Prime Minister Major — who recently proposed to me three times before breakfast, incidentally — that they will get absolutely nowhere until they wear full-dress uniform rather than sloppy, ill-fitting "genes" and so forth, which every Englishman knows are only worn by queers, footballers or similar.

By the way, I am terribly popular in Yugoslavia. I have sold over forty million books there (50 million in Saudia Arabia, incidentally) and they love me for it.

Very dear friends who know all about these things tell me that the Bosnians have more copies of my books than the Suburbians and they refuse to lend them and that is the root cause of all this fighting.

Often, one can only discover the true reason for a war through talking personally to the experts. I used to be in constant touch with Chairman Mao, who was a little in love with me, proposing five times over a light lunch. This is what so many people simply do not understand.

While we are on the subject, it may interest you to know that my books sell over 65 million copies each year in Saudi Arabia alone.

I am often asked by my many admirers to list my proudest achievements. But how does one measure achievement?

Which is the more marvellous?

- That I received 1534 proposals of marriage during my first Queen Charlotte's Ball?
- Or that I was instrumental in the invention of penicillin?
- That, working flat out at a secret location, I brought about a triumphant end to the Gulf War (General Schwarznegger, Sir Edward Heath and Mr Saddam Hussein were all a little in love with me)?
- Or that, between 1930 and 1950, I received firm offers of marriage from over forty world leaders, including Stalin, Franco, Mussolini, the little American President whose name I forget and my very dear friend Sir Winston Churchill?
- That my books sell well over 100 million copies each year in Saudi Arabia alone?
- Or that I invented the concept of the EEC on an Egyptian cruise with Dickie Mountbatten in June, 1932?
- That I have twice been ranked the most dignified member of the British Royal Family by the National Home Furnishing Association of Colorado Springs?
- Or that Princess Diana found everlasting love and happiness through constantly reading re-reading my books?

In the end, as any Englishman will tell you, it is none of these outstanding achievements, unequalled in our century, that matters.

No. What matters above all else is selflessness, serenity and humility.

And God — who has always been a little bit in love with me — has blessed me with all three.

At night the flavour changes as Turkish women don't tend to come out at night. Their absence has probably got something to do with the awful organ music that seems so popular here. It takes little persuasion for another tone deaf Turk to leap up in a lokanta and wildly pump his organ, singing incomprehensible words in between gasps for air.

Lancaster Travel

£600,000 CUT — savings on running costs by selling off 12 old peoples to private buyers.

Bradford Telegraph & Argus

In paragraph eight we referred to the company as a "*terrible* British company", this should of course have read as "a *terribly* British company".

Fashion Weekly referring to Hackett menswear

CHARITY WORM SCOFF IS OFF!

A fundraiser scrapped his plan to eat a slimy seawater ragworm inch by inch for charity last night after a storm of protests.

The chew-in was one of a series of events at Lee, Hants, for Barnardo kids. An RSPCA officer said: "This is tasteless."

The Sun

Literary Review

HG Sauce

The Invisible Man: The Life and Liberties of H.G. Wells
Michael Coren
(Bloomsbury, £20)

A COMMON biographer's trick in these publicity-conscious times is to take some reasonably well-known fact about his or her subject and convert it, by means of agitated squeaks about conspiracies and cover-ups, into the blinding revelation of "truth".

Shortly before Christmas, for example, W.J. West published *The Larger Evils*, a highly tendentious study of George Orwell which, while purporting to reveal the "truth" behind the composition of *1984*, in fact disclosed only the paucity of Mr West's background reading. The targets, sad to relate, had been brought down years before, and by more agile pens.

Michael Coren's life of H.G. Wells, the shock waves of whose advance publicity have been resonating around literary London for weeks, falls into a similar category. It is one of those "controversial" biographies, don't you know, which seek to convict a famous man of all manner of hitherto unsuspected depravity.

Something of its intent can be deduced from the sweet reasonableness with which Mr Coren sets out his stall. "I prefer sympathy with the truth," he announces demurely, "and if in pursuit of such I lose sympathy for my subject, it does not in any way tarnish or lessen my motives or sense of empathy." Two hundred and forty pages of industrious dirt-digging later, we are left with what an excitable Bloomsbury publicist has called "one of those iconoclastic biographies that change our perception of their subjects for ever".

Really? The reader, sifting through this slim and notably overpriced volume, which , despite its brevity, seems to have taken its author more than three years to write, might be forgiven for thinking that he has missed something. The dirt is there all right: by the time of Wells's death in 1946 he stands convicted of a politically incorrect attitude to women, rampant anti-semitism, a belief in the value of eugenics as a solution to the world's population problems and a diverting collection of personal failings.

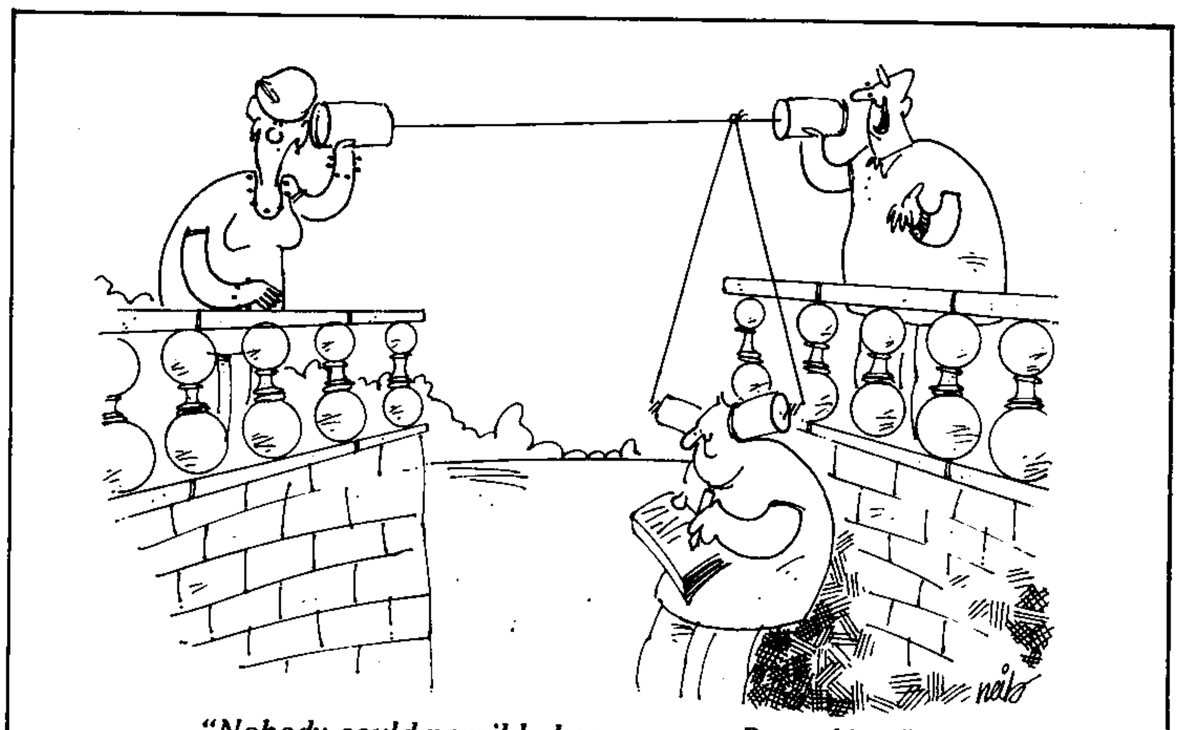
The slight drawback is that none of this can really be said to fall into the category of blinding revelation. There are some stern noises about H.G. being previously "untouched by charges of anti-semitism", but those accusations were made by Orwell (and others) about half a century ago. Wells's views on eugenics were given an airing in John Carey's *The Intellectuals and the Masses*, published last year, and if Coren had wanted an exposition of Wells's opinions of women, which might be summarised as "I support your demand for liberty, now take your clothes off", he need only have looked at Peter Kemp's invaluable study *H.G. Wells and the Culminating Ape*, which is about 10 years old.

Paper tigers, then, tiptoeing through the long grass and trying to look fierce in the company of impressionable reviewers, and about as novel, at this stage in the proceedings, as the suggestion that Byron slept with his half-sister or that John Lennon took drugs. What, you might wonder, is the point of this debunking?

Like all those books about Dickens's mistreatment of his wife, *The Invisible Man* is written with the not quite deliberate assumption that bad behaviour on the part of the artist somehow extinguishes the value of his or her art. Mr Coren does not actually say in so many words that because H.G. Wells had disgusting views on the Jewish question his books are worthless, but the conviction lurks beneath all the pious references to the "stain on his writing and his character that is indelible".

This is a depressingly common assumption in current literary criticism. We had it recently with Philip Larkin, and now it seems we have to have it again with Wells. But it ought to be possible to acknowledge that a man can be a great novelist while simultaneously holding opinions that are anathema to the majority of civilised people. We may not like him for it, but they no more invalidate his work than, as Orwell put it, the second-best bed invalidates *Hamlet*.

Another clue to Coren's intentions comes in the book's queerly lop-sided feel. The point about H.G. Wells is that he was the author of four or five of the finest social comedies in the language, a topic to which Mr Green devotes about three pages. As a political and social pundit — Coren's chief area of inquiry — he stops being interesting in about 1914. But it suits Mr Coren's purpose to ignore this. The result is a massively prejudicial work which, inevitably enough, adds hardly anything to our understanding of Wells or his achievement.



"Nobody could possibly hear us now, Bunnykins!"

BOOKS & BOOKMEN

■ SIR ROGER "Rabbit" Elliott, self-appointed supremo of Oxford University Press and still in search of a peerage, was aghast to have drawn to his attention at the end of last year a prominent advertisement in the *Oxford Times*.

It was placed by respected English language textbook author R.W. Noble, and requested information from Oxford readers "who know first-hand the facts behind the landmark case of Andrew Malcolm versus OUP". Malcolm, *Eye* readers will recall, was the author whose contract to publish a philosophy book the Press refused to honour, and who as a result took the august imprint to court and was recently awarded £35,000 in damages.

Noble's advertisement asked specifically: "Can anyone show me the missing papers from the late July 1985 delegates' meeting?" This was a particularly strange request as, in the witness box, Sir Dodger "Rabbit" swore that OUP's supervisory board of delegates kept no record of general books (as opposed to academic books) which were due to be discussed at the delegates meeting on 23 July 1985. And Sir Roger could not possibly have intended to perjure himself.

Thus is must now be embarrassing to him that a copy of the list, dated 19 July 1985 and circulated "to all delegates", has come to light.

Five books were presented by the Press's then general books' editor, Will Sulkin (now running Random House's Pimlico imprint, but whose memory of these events is curiously forgetful). They were Ann Pasternak Slater's critical biography of *Evelyn Waugh*; a collection of essays on another Eliot, T.S., edited by James Olney; *The Annotated Innocence of Father Brown*; Andrew Malcolm's famous work, *Making Names*; and *The New Oxford Book of Modern Verse* edited by James Fenton.

The minutes of the meeting of the delegates of the Press record that, under the item "General Publications", "The proposal for *The New Oxford Book of Modern Verse* was deferred for further consideration... The other titles tabled were approved." The other titles, of course, included Andrew Malcolm's book.

Reaching into OUP's annual profits of £17m, Sir Rabbit is paying £275 per hour to solicitor Michael "Mickey Mouse" Smyth, of Clifford Chancer, in an on-going effort to bolster his increasingly hazardous reputation. The lawyers have already pocketed more than £400,000 from the charitable publishers during their seven-year war with the dogged Malcolm.

But why should the American, London-based author and *New York Times* writer Noble be so interested in the Malcolm affair? Surely not because he was contracted by OUP, at the height of the oil boom, to write a series of English language text books aimed at the Middle East market but, when the oil bubble burst, the Press bailed out of its contract, having published only a single title?

Noble demanded full compensation for loss of potential earnings, and was of course refused. Eventually, tired of months of legal wrangling, he turned up unexpectedly at OUP's Walton Street offices, asking to see Sir Rabbit. He was told he was not in the country. Noble pitched camp, declining to leave until Elliott saw him. A female editor with whom Noble had worked greeted him in friendly fashion, and was dragged away, screaming, by security guards. Noble continued to refuse to be manhandled from the premises, and was eventually put in an office from which the telephones were removed.

Some hours later, Sir Rabbit materialised, and to his quivering horror Noble served him and his branch director, R. (another Roger) C. Boning, with a writ. The arbitration hearing between R.W. Noble and The Chancellor, Masters and Scholars of the University of Oxford is slated to be heard shortly.

Meanwhile, no doubt expecting further mad authors to put in their oars, Sir Roger has appointed a full-time lawyer to the staff, Miss Justine Winternitz (*sic*).

'Bookworm'

SNIPCOCK & TWEED
SO WHAT'S HAPPENING BACK THERE TWEED?
JAMES HERBERT'S BEEN LURED TO HARPER COLLINS WITH A LUDICROUS FIGURE!
JEFFREY ARCHER
HOTEL SCHLOSS ADLER
BELL'S CLANGER

SANCTIONS BUSTING

St Michael Shirt tales

THE saga of Marks and Spencer's school shirts grows curiouser and curiouser.

Until last summer — up to and even after the imposition of UN sanctions against Serbia — thousands of these shirts were imported by M&S's supplier, Dewhirst Ltd, from a Serbian factory run by Slobodan Milosovic. As revealed in the last *Eye*, Dewhirst now claims to be "sourcing" the shirts in Macedonia, which is not covered by sanctions. It will not, however, say whether Milosovic's company still has a hand in the business.

Three lorries carrying 42,000 shirts for M&S arrived in Hull on 30 December 1992 — and were immediately impounded by customs, acting on a tip-off from Labour MP Dale Campbell-Savours. The first curious thing customs officers discovered was that, in spite of coming from the former Yugoslavia, some of the shirts bore "Made In England" labels.

Two of the lorry-drivers, who were detained by customs after four-week journeys through a Balkan winter, resigned their jobs within hours of coming home. "Every man's hand was against us," driver Brian St Louis told the *Eye* from his house in Arpley, Nottingham. He was job-hunting after resigning from the Reading-based, South African-owned hauliers Burlington Ocean Express, the transport firm used by Dewhirst.

"Everyone suspected that we were carrying Serbian-made goods, even though we picked them up in no man's land. We got no back-up. The Italian customs refused to accept our papers. We had to fly home for Christmas and get fresh papers to get out of Italy before the new year. Then the British customs gave us hell when we landed in Hull."

His colleague John Wright, now back home in Blackpool, said: "The customs have told me they are coming round to look at the tachographs to find out exactly where we went when we were up in the snow in the Macedonian mountains. I don't like the sound of it."

The three Burlington Express trailers were eventually released last week, after a six-day detention, since customs investigators could find no evidence that their cargo was made in Serbia. Dewhirst's managing director, Alan Roberts, assured customs that the shirts were made up from British-supplied materials in factories run by two firms — Otex and Astibo — in Macedonia. He said Dewhirst's engineers had personally inspected the machines used by Otex to ensure they were capable of producing the M&S shirts and that Otex was not merely being used as a "laundry" (*sic*) for Serbian-made clothes.

But another lorry-driver, David Woodyard, veteran of three M&S runs in the weeks after UN sanctions came into force, has now revealed a link between Otex and Genex, the Milosovic-controlled firm in Belgrade. On one of his runs, he told the *Eye*, he had to haul Serbian-made shirts out of Serbia to a factory in Macedonia owned by Otex.

Woodyard also showed us an astonishing "driver's briefing guide" issued by Burlington Express when it despatched a convoy of lorries to rescue six loads of shirts, worth about £5 million, which were trapped in Serbia last year after a special sanctions exemption notice issued by the British government had expired. Directing the drivers to the Otex factory at Ohrid, Macedonia, the guide says:

"When at the factory quote the name of Genex. Road is dual carriageway until about 30km from the factory.

"Drivers must not tell anyone that these shirts are from Serbia. All and everything from Ohrid, Macedonia.

"Destroy any paperwork relating, showing Serbian factory and on carnets, when stamped by Hungarians, get page torn out.

"Ensure no seals on trailers which show Hungary."

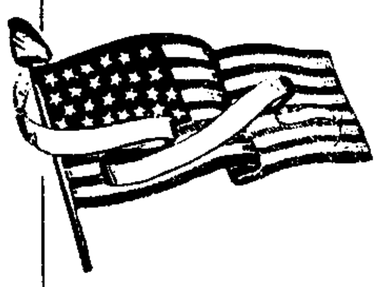
Woodyard, a highly experienced long-haul driver from Wigan, was declared redundant after making his way home with his third load of Serbian M&S shirts. On his way out to Spain last week, driving for a new employer, he said: "I was allowed through Hungary twice, but on the third run they took instructions from their government in Budapest and turned me back. They stamped our carnets to try to stop us using them to escape from Serbia by any other route. My boss, Jim Langton, told us to sit for a while on the Serbian frontier. After three days in Subotica, we were told to head for Ohrid in Macedonia, to technically import the goods through there.

"I was disgusted. We were doing the Serbians' dirty work for them. They told us no local haulier would do the job. It was dodgy. They told us to say nothing. It all comes down to notes. They had promised us £300 in our hands. I have a wife and child to think about.

"When I pulled into Ohrid, they didn't want to know me. But eventually, the Otex factory manager told me he had had a call from Genex in Belgrade. My load was being 're-manufactured'. Re-manufacturing to them means parking in their yard for three days until they give you a new set of papers saying the shirts are Macedonian-made. They never even opened up my trailer, never touched my shirts. With all that deception I knew I was sanctions-busting. I was too scared to talk about it until now."

In spite of the wide-open border between Serbia and Belgrade's old province of Macedonia, the UN sanctions cover only Serbia and Montenegro and do not apply even to Serbian-owned firms like Genex if they are operating out of Macedonia. No wonder Slobodan Milosovic seems so pleased with himself these days. One wonders, however, what Marks and Spencer's customers will make of it all.

THE PRESIDENCY



Same old Bush and Bull

GEORGE BUSH — the man who told *Time* magazine: "We've had a good clean administration. Our ethical standards are high" — is going out as he came in: up to his ears in cover-ups, deceits and unanswered questions.

Contragate, Iraqgate, October Surprise... as the president leaves the White House no fewer than five government departments plus the CIA and the FBI are under investigation for one misdemeanour or another.

It therefore isn't surprising that the Bush administration is engaged in desperate track-covering; and that the main means has been that old favourite, destruction of records.

Over the last eight years the US government has moved towards the electronic transmission and storage of memos, communiques, minutes and transcripts, which has presented great possibilities in the development of two sets of records — the official "clean" printed documents designed to meet the legal requirements of the federal records act; and a secret, unofficial set stored on computer by which the real underhand or simply embarrassing business can be communicated and stored.

On 7 January a federal judge in Washington ruled for the second time against White House plans to wipe scores of crucial computer tapes, making a temporary restraining order permanent. Judge Charles Richey decided the records were of "tremendous historical value" and added: "Left to themselves, agencies have a built-in incentive to dispose of records relating to their mistakes."

Bush's case was ingenious. He claimed nothing on the three main presidential computer systems fitted the federal definition of a "record"; and he is now appealing against the ruling. But that may be incidental. For despite a stern warning from Judge Richey that the administration could face civil and criminal action the ruling is disregarded, on 8 January the White House said it might still begin destroying "unspecified" records immediately.

In fact there is little point in Bush trying to cover his tracks. All the key players in the Iran-contra scandal — Oliver North, General Richard Secord, George Shultz, Caspar Weinberger — have written books, released memos and diaries or testified to Congress — that Bush knew about the illegal deals that swapped arms for hostages and cash to fund the contra rebels in Nicaragua during 1985-86. Some have gone further, saying Bush was a big enthusiast, a prime instigator.

This would have been repeated at Weinberger's trial; and key communiques in the electronic record, if released under the freedom of information act, would have confirmed the extent of Bush's involvement. In pardoning Weinberger, Bush was pardoning himself. The spurious grounds for the pardon — "patriotism" — sets a dangerous precedent that could serve Bush well, if — as special prosecutor Lawrence Walsh promises — the president becomes the subject of continuing investigations.

Then of course there was Iraqgate: Bush is up to his neck in the famous foreign policy "tilt" towards Iraq which became a full blown government credit-line scheme to arm the man Bush was later to compare to Hitler and wage war on.

As early as June 1984, when US Import-Export Bank chairman William Draper III was balking at opening credit lines to a country on Washington's terrorist list, he received a phone call from his former Yale classmate George Herbert Walker Bush. The bank duly extended a US$484 million loan guarantee. In 1987 Bush did the same thing with Draper's successor, John Bohn, days before he was due to meet Iraq's ambassador in Washington. Baghdad got another US$200 million. Scripts exist for both these calls.

But that was just the beginning. Although the justification for supplying Iraq with credits, weapons and intelligence largely ended with the Iran-Iraq war in 1988, it actually increased from the beginning of the Bush administration in 1989. When more cautious voices objected, official papers now secured by Texas Democrat Henry B. Gonzalez show that Bush and his secretary of state, James Baker, repeatedly intervened.

In national security decision directive 26, a document the administration has refused to declassify, Bush personally ordered that efforts to improve relations with Iraq were to continue as part of a strategy to protect US interests in the Persian Gulf.

In 1989, the US department of agriculture coughed up a US$1 billion loan-guarantee package under its Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC). By the time Saddam invaded Kuwait, CCC had extended US$3.37 billion in loan guarantees to Iraq and Bush and Baker had ignored the mounting evidence that it was being used to help Saddam circumvent international arms embargoes. Indeed, enabling Saddam to buy US computer technology for his missile controls rooms, German centrifuges for uranium enrichment plants and "non-lethal" items like armoured ambulances, was the main aim.

The best evidence of this is the cover-up which, as congress started to investigate last summer, Bush and Baker authorised. The commerce department, which had permitted the illegal export of military technology, altered documents showing that they knew that at least some exports going to Iraq had military applications. Documents containing warnings from the CIA and US companies that items sold to Iraq had potential military uses have disappeared.

Back in Iran, however, the Republican team had been obsessed with the prospect of what became known as "an October surprise". William Casey, Reagan's masterspy who was to become head of the CIA, was detailed to deal with the mullahs. But Casey was an unknown to the revolutionaries. At various stages during the collusion with the Republicans they demanded guarantees with someone who was somebody. Who better than the junior partner on the ticket? Who better than the ex-head of the CIA, George Bush.

If readers ever have the chance to ask Bush one question, it should be: where was he on the weekend of 19-20 October 1980? So far he has given four versions. The most probable — although unproven — truth is that he flew to Paris to seal the deal by meeting, among others, Khomeini's personal negotiator, Mehdi Karrubi.

Secret service records, phone and travel logs and 1,980 campaign records, all in the government's possession and probably in the electronic records, would of course provide the answer.

ENERGY

Just say *Non*!

WITH A DEATH sentence hanging over the British coal industry and the government's energy "policy" a shambles, is it sensible for consumers to continue to subsidise *France's* already heavily-subsidised nuclear-generated electricity industry?

In the next fortnight or so two rival teams — from the department of trade and industry and the Commons select committee of that ilk — must come up with solutions to the problems created by electricity privatisation: namely, how to reduce surplus supplies of either gas, coal or nuclear power at the height of a slump.

The popular solution would be to copy most other European Community countries and pay a subsidy for coal. The rumour floated by the DTI is that Michael Heseltine is considering a £10 per tonne subsidy. One sensible way to contribute to the cost of this would be to end the absurd dumping of electricity imports from France.

While whole mining communities threatened, it seems almost unbelievable that the British consumer is paying a subsidy to the French nuclear monopoly, Electricité de France, of £150 million a year. EdF already enjoys vast hidden subsidies from the French government, which underwrites its debts of £20 billion and its borrowings to service the interest, and it can thus afford to supply 6 six per cent of the UK's electricity via a 2,000 megawatt cable under the English Channel. This replaces about six million tonnes of coal — or 2,000 miners' jobs.

Another way to pay for the subsidy would be to divert funds from the infamous nuclear levy — which British consumers also pay to the French. The *Eye* has often written about this 11 percent hike on domestic electricity bills that is paid to Nuclear Electric. (The European Commission allows the £1.3 billion a year levy to compensate Nuclear Electric for its inherited commitments, such as having to decommission old power stations.) Because French electricity is almost entirely generated by nuclear stations, France too gets the 11 percent British levy for the power she sells us, although she does not have the same justification for it.

Hitherto the European Commission has told Britain that we cannot subsidise our coal mines — because we have used up our permitted energy subsidy on nuclear power — all the while ignoring France's evasion of the rules. The same EC has told Britain that it cannot understand why we are proposing to close coal mines which produce the cheapest coal in Europe. Indeed, the government itself disclosed in the Commons that a tonne of "European" coal receives the following subsidies: Belgium £55; Germany £39; Spain £19; and France £10.

If Heseltine has even a spark of his old spirit left after all his cock-ups and the battering he has invited, he should perhaps tell the French that the AC/DC converter station at Sellindge, near Folkestone, which opened in 1986, now needs extensive overhaul and will have to be closed in April when the French supply licence runs out.

That would be a start — if the will exists inside the government and British Coal, both of whom have been behaving as if they *want* to see the coal industry shut down.

● THE sneaky method used by the now defunct energy department to scupper the work of the renewable energy advisory group (REAG) has come to light.

Inserted at the start of REAG's terms of reference were the dread words: "Consistent with current government financial support for renewable energy..." This was a civil service warning to REAG's respected scientists that they had better not include any proposal that required extra cash.

The restriction was not disclosed when REAG was launched in August 1991. The person responsible for imposing it was the then permanent secretary, Mr John Guinness. He is a nuclear fanatic who later took early retirement to become chairman of British Nuclear Fuels.

SCOTT INQUIRY

Any Answers?

AS THE *EYE* has noted in the past, the department of trade and industry has ordered an inquiry into the former arms company Astra. For the first time in British industrial history, it was asked to do so by the firm itself.

The inspectors, set up by Peter Lilley when he was trade secretary, are Colin Rimer QC, who was an exact contemporary at school and university with Peter Lilley, and Mr John White, an accountant at Peat Marwick, whose unsullied record as auditors took a bit of a knock when their American enterprise audited the Georgian Banco di Lavoro and gave it four clean audit certificates. (The Banco di Lavoro is now under close scrutiny in the US for its conversion of $4 billion in "agricultural credits" into armaments for Saddam Hussein.)

Many City experts felt that the Rimer/White inquiry might be put on ice pending the new top-level investigation into the arms-for-Iraq scandal under Lord Justice Scott. Not so. Messrs Rimer and White have been galvanised into a new burst of activity. There are, however, a number of rather more important questions which many people hope will be addressed and answered by the inquiry, chief among which are:

● Why were Astra chairman Gerald James and other directors, including Jim Miller, sacked so soon after disclosing to the proper authorities that their new acquisition, the Belgian company PRB, had contracts to sell arms to Iraq and Iran, contracts which carried with them the most monstrous commissions to individuals?

● Why was only one former director allowed to stay on the Astra board — Stefan Kock, an adviser to the Midland bank (when Sir John Cuckney was a director there) and a former British intelligence agent in what used to be Rhodesia?

● What was the function of the three big shareholdings in Astra — 20 percent by 3i (chairman Sir John Cuckney), 12 percent by the Pru (chairman Sir Brian Corby) and 5 percent by Clerical and Medical insurance company (chairman Sir Douglas Morpeth)?

● What did these big companies do to safeguard their investment in Astra after James and the other directors were so mysteriously sacked in early 1990? How was it that the new chairman, "company doctor" Roy Barber, who was paid £387,000 for his first year in the job, managed to run down Astra without securing a single order — so that Astra went into receivership last year?

● What was the real nature of the apparently knock-down sale of the three main parts of Astra — the American side to a company controlled in part by former US naval secretary John Lehmann; the Belgian section to the French nationalised arms company GIAT; and the British section (BMARC — former director J. Aitken, minister for defence procurement and this month's hagiographer of former crook and president of the United States, Richard Nixon) to Mrs Thatcher's former favourite production company, British Aerospace?

● Could there be anything in the rumour that some of the shareholdings in Astra were held on behalf of the Iraqi government? This would hardly be surprising in view of the deep penetration by Saddam's agents into British industry, details of which (especially as it affected TI, deputy chairman Sir John Cuckney) emerged at the recent Matrix Churchill trial. If so, could the explanation of what happened to Astra be as follows?

In early 1990, it was suddenly becoming clear to a number of British businessmen, civil servants and even ministers that Saddam Hussein, The Friend and Trusty Ally of the West, was suddenly turning into a monster and an enemy. Those who were aware of the depth of Saddam's penetration into Astra panicked, sacked the unsuspecting chairman and directors, leaving only the man most closely associated with British intelligence, S. Kock, and proceeded apace to wind up the company and flog off its assets. To tie the whole package nicely, the DTI was brought in to "investigate" the company and if possible put all the blame for its demise on the chairman and directors who had been sacked.

Further to assist Messrs Rimer and White with these vital questions, here are some random facts:

● Sir Douglas Morpeth, chairman of Clerical and Medical Insurance, is an accountant who was for many years senior partner at Touche Ross.

● Egmont Kock, son of Stefan, is a partner at Touche Ross.

● Paul Cormack, who worked in the arms export advice department of the Midland Bank when Sir John Cuckney was a director there, is now working in a senior capacity at Touche Ross.

● Mr Peter Lilley, now social services secretary, wrote several letters before the Matrix Churchill trial in an attempt to prevent the flow of information about the DTI's role in the arming of Iraq before 1990. Messrs Rimer and White will of course have complete access to these letters and they should not in any way be intimidated from commenting on them in their report by the fact that it was Mr Lilley who appointed them.

The three wise guys?

IGNORING Astra, how much money does a company have to lose before the DTI will appoint inspectors to investigate it? The answer, to judge by recent examples, must be "very much indeed". For instance:

● The Prudential insurance company (Motto: "I wannabe a millionaire") lost a billion pounds on its reckless venture into estate agency. There will be no DTI inquiry.

● Royal Insurance lost half a billion pounds on a ridiculous venture to buy up an Italian insurance company. There will be no DTI inquiry.

● Mirror Group Newspapers lost about £100m in its first nine months as a public company. There will be no DTI inquiry.

The refusal of the DTI to get involved in any of these gigantic disasters comes as an enormous relief to the three men now in charge of the three companies — all of them mighty pillars of the establishment.

At the head of the Pru is Sir Brian Corby, knighted by Mrs Thatcher in 1989, and a Thatcher-appointed director of the Bank of England since 1985. Chairman of Royal Insurance is Sir John Cuckney, who is also chairman of the investment company 3i Group. Sir John has had a hand in innumerable big British businesses, including the Midland Bank (director 1978-1988), the TI Group where, as deputy chairman from 1985-1990, he watched TI subsidiary Matrix-Churchill fall into the hands of the Iraqi government and, most memorably, Westland plc where, as chairman, he backed Mrs Thatcher vigorously against her defence secretary in the furious dispute of 1986.

Sir John Cuckney was appointed recently to hunt down the £700 million-odd lost by the Maxwell pension funds, which brings us to the third man in this formidable trio — the chairman of Mirror Group Newspapers, Sir Robert Clark.

Clark has also been involved in many big business boardrooms, including British Leyland, later the Rover Group, Smithkline and Beecham, Hill Samuel (where he was chairman from 1980 to 1990) and of course the Bank of England where he was a director for 10 years, leaving the board in 1985, the year Sir Brian Corby joined it.

The relief shared by these three mighty knights does not, however, extend down the line to more humble British firms that are scrutinized by the DTI.

COAL v. DOLE

Fuelling the row

DESPITE the round of last-ditch hearings, reports and debates, the writing was on the wall for the miners long before Michael Heseltine's announcement last October that 30,000 of them would have to go.

The first hint came more than 12 months ago when N.M. Rothschild, advisers to the government, said the coal industry could only be privatised if it were reduced from 50 pits to around a dozen.

That is the mandate that has been followed ever since, and it led to the episode in which Malcolm Edwards, the British Coal marketing manager, was driven out of his job because he believed a bigger coal industry could and should survive.

Neil Clarke, a chartered accountant, was appointed chairman in January 1991. He had worked in South Africa as a director for the Anglo American Coal Corporation, and was chosen as someone from outside British Coal who would have the right attitude.

Since the storm broke, British Coal managers have often seemed reluctant, to say the least, to seize opportunities to keep their industry alive. They are of course aware that when big industries like theirs are privatised, the top brass are often rewarded with astronomical pay rises and generous share options.

Clarke may understand the finance, but plainly he is not in command of the situation. Appearing before the Commons industry select committee, he found it impossible to answer a straight question about which pits were in danger and which were not. This could leave him in danger as Hezza may now drop him.

Offer one can't refuse...

LIKE Heseltine and Clarke, Professor Stephen Littlechild, director-general of the Office of Electricity Regulation (Offer), is also occupying a hot seat.

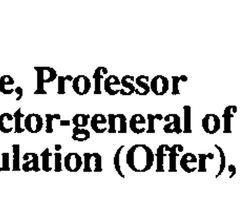
Before Christmas he reported that gas was cheaper than coal as a fuel for making electricity. But it has now been disclosed by the influential newsletter *Coal UK*, published by the *FT*, that Offer used as consultants a firm called London Economics — "a company which has featured as adviser to a number of the gas station projects for the RECs (regional electricity companies)."

As *Coal UK* adds: "Since the review centred upon whether the gas power contracts offered power more cheaply or more expensively than coal-fired generation, it was perhaps expecting too much for them to come to a conclusion that they had been mistaken about gas all along."

Offer says it held a competitive tender and asked consultants if they had a conflict of interest. It is presumed London Economics gave the right answer.

THORP

Emissions omissions



NEW LIGHT has been shed on the desperation of British Nuclear Fuels (BNFL) to avoid another public inquiry into its plan to start operating Thorp, the £1.85 billion thermal oxide removal plant at Sellafield.

An inquiry would inevitably expose as disingenuous BNFL's claim that radioactive emissions from the Sellafield complex will be *lower* under the new discharge authorisations it is seeking to accommodate Thorp's operation. Actual discharges would be significantly *higher* than they have been for years.

The reason is that BNFL's argument concentrates on the *limits* allowed in the existing and proposed new regimes. These show that the radiation dose to members of the public from aerial discharges would fall by nearly 50 percent, while that from marine discharges would rise fractionally, resulting in a "significant" overall reduction.

What the company conveniently overlooks is that for the past five years the critical radioactive emissions from Sellafield have not exceeded 25 percent of the prevailing limits. By contrast, an analysis of BNFL's latest application reveals that the company would have to use between 50 and 75 percent of the new authorisations if it operates Thorp. John Large, the nuclear consultant who is advising nine Irish local authorities on the issue, said: "That means you have a net increase in the amount of radioactive material going into the environment."

A public inquiry might also highlight an embarrassing discrepancy between the dose limits the nuclear installations inspectorate (NII), as the licensing authority for Thorp, should impose and the emission levels that Her Majesty's inspectorate of pollution (HMIP) and the ministry of agriculture, fisheries and food (MAFF) seem prepared to sanction.

One would expect the recommendation from the national radiological protection board (NRPB) that the maximum dose from a single source (ie Sellafield) should not exceed 0.3 millisieverts to govern the NII's ruling. However, the discharge levels that HMIP and MAFF are countenancing would result in an "average" dose of this level, which means in some cases the recommended limit would be exceeded.

The response of the NII to this dilemma — the NII being the ultimate watchdog on nuclear safety — is hardly reassuring. One of its chief inspectors, Dr D.J.F. Ewing, wrote to Large that the basic safety limit of 0.3 millisieverts could not be regarded as either "rigidly fixed" or "superior" to any authorisations that MAFF or HMIP might agree.

ROAD v. RAIL

Driven out of business?

ROAD hauliers, some of the Tory government's favourite polluters, are laughing all the way to the bank following the Conservatives' pre-election "promise" that they would ensure more freight travelled by rail.

Since the election British Rail's Railfreight division has lost so much custom it is unlikely to survive until privatisation, let alone after it.

While the owners of lorry firms are not responsible for mending the roads their monster vehicles destroy, the government's perverse insistence that freight trains must cover all their infrastructure costs *and* make a profit resulted in the axing in the summer of 1991 of Speedlink, a network that serviced lots of private factory sidings. Now many of the sidings — set up with government grants — lie idle because goods go cheaper by road.

One private railfreight company, Tiger Rail, rescued several former Speedlink services in an entrepreneurial show of force and collapsed six months later. Shortly after the election the futuristic lorry-cum-train vehicles of the other private railfreight flag-bearer, Charterail, provided a suitable photo opportunity for the new transport secretary John MacGregor — suitable because Charterail went to the wall a few months later.

One of Charterail's last acts was to order 100 small-wheeled wagon bogies from Powell Duffryn Standard, Britain's largest wagon builder. The latter company put most of its resources into developing extra-low rail wagons which could carry continental-sized containers through BR's narrow tunnels and bridges. Although dozens of the special bogies are performing well in everyday service, BR (reflecting the government's shortsightedness) stubbornly refused to order more and the company had to lay off its employees. Incoming Channel tunnel freight will thus have to be loaded on to modern horses and carts at Folkestone.

Last year dozens of freight flows left rail to go by road, and several lines closed as a result. Future economic recovery, or a more enlightened government, might have led to some rail traffic being restored. But Railfreight is ruling out that option by scrapping its surplus locomotives. Disused rail tracks, although irreplaceable, are soon ripped up. The massacre of Britain's coal industry will erode Railfreight's profitable foundation, putting at risk passenger and other freight services which share tracks with coal trains.

The root of the problem is that road hauliers are not required to pay for the immense damage they cause to the roads. They can therefore undercut Railfreight, which has to cover all its infrastructure costs. Instead of offering financial incentives for rail freight in recognition of the congestion, pollution, road damage and accidents it *avoids*, the government is cleverly offering a massive incentive to road freight.

FACT: The road lobby (hauliers, road builders, maintenance firms etc) pours millions of pounds into Tory party coffers and many Tory MPs made their fortunes in such businesses.

GOLF

Beware men with clubs

AMBITIOUS golf course developers John Steven and Peter Alliss have a strange approach to conservation and planning law.

At their Castle Combe Golf Club, which sits in a magnificent and supposedly protected corner of North Wiltshire and was opened by the Duke of York last summer, the pair have been busy chopping down trees and making the earth move — in defiance of just about everyone who matters.

As a glossy brochure from the club says, the site is in a conservation area officially designated a place of outstanding natural beauty. "Here flows the sparkling By Brook — home to an abundance of wildlife and rare plants — which runs its course amidst ancient oak, ash and beech trees. Beside it lie the earthwork remains of a Norman motte and bailey castle — the ruined fortress from which the nearby village takes its name."

But an area of once outstanding natural beauty is now criss-crossed by a maze of ugly buggy paths. Trees have been removed, branches lopped and wildlife habitats along river banks cut down — all without notifying or consulting any of the relevant authorities. Why? To make the beautiful site even more attractive... to golfers.

The story of the club starts in December 1989 when Steven arranged the purchase of the land. It had planning permission for a golf course, together with a "section 52 agreement". The agreement laid down conservation obligations for the purchaser and was between North Wiltshire district council and the owner, in perpetuity, of the golf course.

A company was formed to develop the course, which was designed by Allis and Clive Clark. Construction began in July 1990, but a planning regulation to submit engineering details was ignored. Laws governing the protection of ancient monuments were broken on three occasions.

Last summer the course and clubhouse were completed and grandly opened by the golf-mad Duke of Pork. But the cost of a membership "share" was £15,000-£17,000 and only 66 people took up this bargain offer. By September lack of funds forced the founding company to sell to a new company, BPL Ltd, behind which is a holding company called Compdon Holdings. Its directors include, er, John Steven and Peter Alliss.

New membership terms were offered and marketing blurbs again emphasised the conservation and beauty aspects of the course while stating the intention to make the course easier for the higher handicapper and to construct buggy paths, subject to obtaining planning permission.

By last October, within days of BPL taking over, machinery moved in and started work, all without notifying the local council or consulting over conservation matters within the terms of the section 52 agreement. Earthmoving was also carried out within the perimeter of the ancient monument without permission from English Heritage.

The buggy paths are now constructed and the tees enlarged, and bits of the course now look worse than an urban park. Worryingly, there has been no action from North Wilts district council, English Heritage or the National Rivers Authority to stop the desecration of this part of the Bybrook Valley.

In the City

THE government of Nauru narrowly escaped losing up to $60 million in three associated scams revolving around City solicitor Robert Adrian Powles and the mythical markets in prime bank notes and standby letters of credit.

Those who, despite the Powles affair, still believe in these fictional instruments of fraud (along with the tooth fairy and Father Christmas) may be far from reassured to learn that the Dutch police, together with Scotland Yard, have uncovered a similar operation involving a totally different crew of conmen, which may have taken victims around the world for upwards of £15 million.

All of which suggests that prime bank notes and standby letters of credit form part of a sophisticated franchised fraud which has been developed and orchestrated by a syndicate of international conmen and is being worked through a world- wide network of accomplices, either with the aim of taking up-front advance fees or more ambitiously stealing part of the funds invested.

Word from Australia provides further details concerning the Nauru scam outlined in the last *Eye*. It seems the initial plan was to entice Nauru through Powles, London partner of the prestigious Sydney law firm of Allen, Allen & Hemsley, to make three investments via Linpar and its mysterious Fijian banking lecturer principal, Dr Gopal. Gopal may not be entirely unrelated to a Gopal Nair who is or was living in Australia.

Some $21 million was to have been invested in the prime bank note scheme supposedly to buy notes with a value of $25 million. Another $25 million was to have gone into something called "master collateral agreements". And $8.5 million was to be invested in purchasing $10 million worth of standby letters of credit. All these wonderful pieces of almost certainly worthless paper were then either to be traded for a profit in the hard to find secret inter-bank market or held to maturity when the profit would be realised from the discount to face value.

Luckily for the Nauruans the loss they now face is only the $8.5 million which disappeared a year ago into the letter of credit scheme. That has neither been repaid nor traced since the whistle was blown on Powles by his partners in Sydney and he booked himself into the funny farm after a short disappearing act and a suicide attempt. The money destined for the master collateral agreements was found and frozen in London. The prime bank note funds were chased round the world and frozen in Singapore.

The Bank of Croatia and other clients of Powles who ended up in one or other scheme have been far less fortunate. Attempts are now being made to track down Gopal/Nair and various American players who seem to have had a handle on the missing millions.

Meanwhile other brokers here in Britain are still out there offering the same $8.5 will get you $10 million deal.

Down Under a lot of questions are being asked about why those in charge of administering the Nauru funds there could be taken in so easily by Powles and his associates. While it is true that Allens are a premier white shoe firm, the wacky nature of the investments Powles was handling should have raised more than a few eyebrows. Unless, as seems very likely, people were encouraged to look the other way.

Similarly questions are being asked about Allens' monitoring of its London partner, a man who, it seems, had a major gambling habit. It has already emerged that other trust funds handled by Powles for Australian clients may have been dipped into. All of which would make the lawyer an ideal and vulnerable accomplice for those behind the scam.

That prime bank notes and standby letters of credit are a scam is expected to be demonstrated at a trial due in May surrounding the activities of the Herengracht group of Amsterdam which created dozens of victims from as far away as Australia who paid fees to obtain loans via the Dutch group. Again this money was to come from investments made in either prime bank notes or standby letters of credit.

The loan was to be provided from the discount or "fall out" provided by purchasing these financial instruments with the aid of philanthropic funding trusts who traded in this highly secret market with major US banks with the aim of not just making profits but also of funding worthy projects. In a typical transaction the face value of the notes was $60 million, which was supposed to generate a loan of $6 million for which the borrower was to pay $65,000 in advance fees. Needless to say, once the fees were paid the loan never materialised.

The man behind Herengracht called himself Johan Eykhout, but was better known as Walter Voss. During 1969-71 Voss, a Dutch bankrupt, ran the Intercambio offshore banking group from headquarters in Brighton. Intercambio eventually went down owing investors $10 million. Voss ran this latest operation for two years until the Dutch police moved in early in 1991. Last year he was jailed for four years.

It seems the many believers in the prime bank note/standby letter of credit fairy tale are due for a rude and expensive awakening.

A FOCUS of the Scotland Yard investigation into allegations of corruption concerning the Polly Peck case is understood to be a suggested $3.5 million agreement between two individuals not directly involved with the trial. Why this agreement — if true — should be of such concern to those engaged in the case is a matter for considerable speculation.

THE *Financial Times*'s David Barchard appears to dislike the role of Asil Nadir's Boswell (Letters, *Eye* 810) attributed to him by the recent review of his flattering study of the former Polly Peck chairman. "Nadir and his chief henchmen refused throughout to see me or answer any questions," he writes, defending his objectivity and relentless search for the truth.

How then to explain such statements as "he... interviewed all the key players" (the bookcover blurb) or "based on access to... the family and wife of Asil Nadir" and "interviews with those who took key decisions" (Gollancz press release). Shurely shome mishtake for a man who claims to have been denounced as a "national arch enemy" by the Turkish press.

Whether this remarkable access for someone who speaks so unflatteringly of his subject and his associates enabled the sensitive Barchard to keep his perspective intact remains to be judged when and if the full story of Polly Peck is revealed in court.

The SFO has been studying the Scotland Yard fraud squad report on Walker for some months. A decision is believed to be imminent. The expectation is that by early next year Walker and maybe two of his associates will have been charged in connection with two payments totalling £12.5 million.

Eye, 18 December 1992

GOOD to see the *Sunday Times*'s City editor Jeff Randall rallying loyally once again to one of his fallen idols. Shortly after Philip Green it is the turn of Gorgeous George Walker, two days after he appeared in court on fraud charges involving £12.5 million. "Even Walker has a limit to how much he can take, and he must be close to it," wrote Randall sympathetically. Next — Roger Levitt?

IT SEEMS a virtual epidemic of fraud is breaking out among company administrators on the septic isle of Jersey. No sooner had Nicholas Hanley begun helping police with inquiries than another manager of local companies for offshore clients was in court. Accountant Anthony Delaney was charged last week with the theft of £960,000 of clients' funds administered by his management company. Self-regulation clearly means something different in Jersey, such as help yourself.

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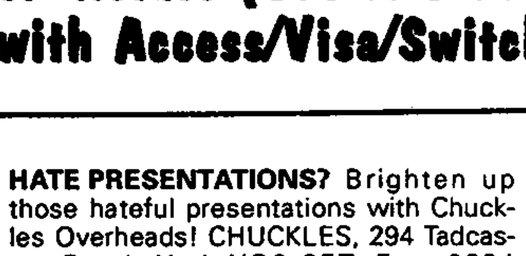

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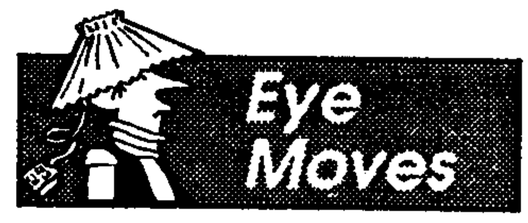

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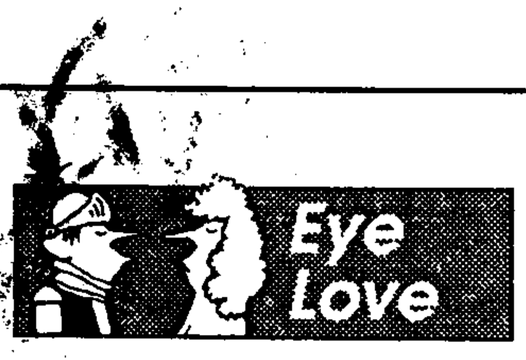

GOOD LOOKING (told) professional male 29 with sense of humour seeks black female London area. Do something positive, reply! Box 1011.

CAMBRIDGE MAN, 36, graduate, attractive, leftish, no baggage. Seeks woman for laughter, thrills and lots, lots more. Box 1111.

SLIM AND SEXY liberated Asian graduate seeks intelligent older female companionship n/s. Box 1211.

CHINA. LISA, 25, beautiful educated Chinese seeks husband. Box 1311.

NORTHERNISH LASS 25-35 sought for discreet dinners and whatever 1993 brings us. Box 1411.

COUNTY GENTLEMAN of independent means 43, 5'11", single, attractive, sporty and cultured seeks female to enjoy the finer things in life with initially and then possibly a long term relationship. 2.2 children welcomed if relevant. Box 1511.

LOVELY LADY 41 seeks chatty companionable extra kind male. Box 1611.

WAIF-LIKE VULNERABLE beauty, slim, very pretty, 25, Oxbridge, artistic, living Chelsea; desires handsome (tall?), kind, offbeat, old-money, pukka, country loving chap for keeps. Photo. Box 1711.

ROBINSON CRUSOE seeks Girl Friday for mutual marooning on exotic island off Cote d'Azur next August. Photo appreciated. Box 1811.

BUSINESSMAN, 51, urbane sophisticated 5'11" athletic build apparently considered attractive amusing would like to meet a similar woman for a happy stimulating sensual exciting and ideally long-term liaison. London. Box 1911.

CHARMING FRANCAISE 45 intelligent attractive well-educated warm-hearted widow with pleasant 'ouse near gay Paree is looking for 'im. Photo S.V.P. Box 2011.

SCANDINAVIA. ENGLISH teacher 35 (interests: arts, outdoor pursuits) seeks correspondence with younger females, preferably brunette. Box 2111.

TALL, DARK, athletic professional male early 40s seeks intelligent sensual and attractive lady for caring relationship to relieve the tedium of marital responsibilities. Passion, sensitivity, consideration and total discretion promised. Let me make you feel someone special again. Photo please. Cleveland/N. Yorks area. Box 2211.

24 YEAR OLD hobbit seeks elven maiden. Likeness and letter appreciated. Box 2311.

ELEGANT VOLUPTUOUS sensual occasionally submissive woman required by unconventional single artist 44 for detailed study. Box 2411.

NON-WHITE BLOKE 22, law undergraduate, handsome, athletic build, seeks wonderful lady 20-30 for passion and friendship. Box 2511.

LONDON MALE, professional, single, tall, balding, humorous and sensitive, seeks older, intelligent, independently minded female to spoil and pamper on a long-term basis. Box 2611.

40S PROFESSIONAL non-ageist with central London flat seeks lady for good times. Tel. no. guarantees immediate response. Box 2711.

GLASGOW MALE, 47 years young, seeks soulmate to pamper. She may well be thirtysomething, slim, not tall, sporty, sensual, n/s, intelligent and a cat-lover, with a taste for soulful jazz, sunshine and good food. Box 4710.

GOOD-LOOKING, WITTY, bubbly intelligent man sought by eternal optimist who is single female, slim, professional, 24 and still looking, London area. Box 4810.

TWO ATTRACTIVE intelligent fun-loving girls, 26, seeking spice in their already hectic social life. Seeking London-based Morecambe and Wise, 26-32. Box 2911.

WARM CUDDLY Cheshire male 45 married seeks occasional intelligent female company. Love laughter and discretion assured. Box 3011.

AFFECTIONATE MALE, 44, tall, attractive and intelligent, seeks nice looking very sexy lady for cerebral and physical pursuits. Lives near London. Box 3111.

AFTER THE BIG "L", a little heaven. Unencumbered, metropolitan professional, exiled in Scargilland, seeks a "fragrant" post-feminist with radio 3/4 mentality to share food, travel and conversation. Box 3211.

PERIPATETIC MALE backtrailed to Leeds Universtiy following antipodean decade. Seeks occasionaly mental-symphony with interesting femme. He forty, she upbeat or downbeat. Box 3311.

CAR BY SAAB, suit by Grisby, music by Don Cherry, children by ex-wife. Stylish Oxford D.Phil seeks equal and opposite passion from intriguing and attractive woman. Thames Valley. Box 3411.

FUR COAT on fair lady 23-40 with long hair is sought to be cuddled by 6'2" successful lawyer in 40s. London area. Box 3308.

BELFAST/DUBLIN: Mistress required! Enquiries Box 4211.

MALE 21 SEEKS girls any age for sincere relationship N/W region. Box 4311.

MARRIED MAN, 50s, seeks affair with nice but dirty minded woman. West Country/M4 corridor. Box 4411.

PROFESSIONAL MALE, "young" 50s, married, limited resources, seeks solvent, sensual, n/s female to share mutually satisfying weekdays/nights. London/South. Box 4511.

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TALL WIZARD 45 wants witch. Presently expat N. Africa return Scotland January. Likes nature mountains unorthodoxy privacy committed relationship. Box 3010.

LONDON LADY with some spare time seeks businessman friend 45ish. Box 3110.

BLONDE ARTS graduate, 32, now City high flier, seeks warm and talented man for walks, outings and hopes of ultimate happiness. Long letter and photo please. Box 3210.

SHY, SENSITIVE, City professional, 26, seeks affectionate lady for romantic evenings and trips to pop gigs. Box 4711.

MALE, 38, LIBRA smoker passionate seeks nice intelligent well-read woman 30-40 Humberside, photo appreciated, solvent. Box 4811.

ATTRACTIVE MAN, 36, slim fit professional seeks attractive independent woman (25-40ish) for walks, talks, kisses, cuddles and morning coffee. West London, can travel. Box 4911.

GREGARIOUS, ATTRACTIVE outgoing well bred lady (mid 40s) seeks Southern home counties professional for country walks and intimate dinners. No philanderers please. Photo appreciated. Box 5011.

TRAINEE PRISON governor (24) seeks witty female cellmate for possible life sentence. Box 5111.

PETERBOROUGH: INTELLECTUAL giant required (female please). Bloke 6'4", 30, slim, wants interesting conversation, probably marriage to tall woman. I am single, so are you. No cat/BMW/Nintendo lovers please. Box 5211.

SOUTH BUCKS MALE. I'm in my mid 30s, professional, slim, tactile, articulate, easygoing and looking for a similar discreet female for flirting, talks, fun and cuddles. Box 5311.

LET'S MEET! Rugged West London male attracted by short skirts, black tights, high heels etc. seeks broad-minded female under 35 (Madonna type) with pert, curvaceous, shapely bottom! For bizzare relationship! Box 5411.

YORKSHIRE-BASED Southerner (male, 47, unattached) seeks likeminded non-smoking non-Tory non-broody female, probably professional, thirties or theareabouts, for companionship, long walks and travel to exotic places. Box 5511.

POETIC BRITTLE female (27) seeks male loving healer. Box 5611.

SENIOR OIL COMPANY executive, based in Aberdeen, 44, attractive, intelligent, slim, just divorced, seeks similar 30s/40s lady, preferably Scotland, Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow, wherever, to share romance, fun and 1993. Please reply to Box 5711.

TANTALISINGLY ATTRACTIVE and sensual up market lady (20-35) sought by good looking successful bachelor (37) based central London but with properties abroad, for occasional very discreet nights/weekends away from the prying eyes of our numerous inquisitive friends! Absolute discretion promised and expected so be brave and send photo and telephone to hasten meeting. Box 5811.

SOCIABLE NOTTINGHAM guy, 43, has one evening a week free for convivial intimacy. Amicable wining and dining for all genuine replies. Box 5911.

HANDSOME SPORTY professional man, 25, vegetarian, seeks lively intelligent woman. London. Box 6011.

MALE PHD STUDENT, 23, seeks female for friendship, cinema, restaurants. Cambridge/London/anywhere. Box 6111.

ROMANTIC, SENSUAL, attractive intelligent blonde (25) seeks tall dark handsome prince (30s). Yorkshire. Box 6211.

CITY-BASED FINANCIAL journalist, 31, tall, amusing, attractive, white, seeks attractive 20s Mid-Eastern, Indian, Pakistani woman. Photo appreciated. Box 6311.

MIDLANDS BASED single male (40) attractive, tall, kind, own business, with bad attack of New Year blues urgently needs ministrations of attractive female. Photo please. Box 6411.

MIDDELSBOROUGH BASED male, 23. Own flat, blue eyed, shy but intelligent. Seeks kinky female for mutual pleasure, possible relationship/cohabitation or uncomplicated meetings. Photo, photo and imaginative letter ensures interest. Box 4510.

WOMAN, 42, DIVORCED, professional, warm, sensual, interesting, n/s, seeks similar man for friendship and perhaps romance. Box 6511.

HANDSOME SINCERE male 21 seeks affectionate loving females 17-23 for passionate loving relationship. I am serious about this. Phone no. essential. N/W region. Box 4611.

WEALTHY COMPANY chairman 46yrs seeks female travelling companion/export assistant part time. Must be slim beautiful sexy cheerful 25-35yrs. Knowledge of French/German useful. Apply with photo if possible. Box 0911.

More than one Box Number reply? Write the numbers on each envelope and put them all in a larger envelope addressed to us marked "BOX NUMBER REPLIES"

WATCH OUT GIRLS, it's about this long and highly dangerous! Want more details? Contact Box 6611.

MAIDSTONE MALE, 25, likes live music, theatre, literature, pubs, dancing, creativity, zany humour, hates hassle and is a little bit shy, seeks similar girl. Photo appreciated. Box 6711.

EFFERVESCENT SOCIAL butterfly seeks totally excellent adventurous chap for outstanding take-offs, hedonistic cruising and perchance a soft landing! Box 6811.

CONFIDENT, SUCCESSFUL, mid-40s, professional businessman, honest, sensitive, too intelligent for his own good, independent, unattached, monogamous, romantic and very passionate seeks a very special, foxy, beautiful, sophisticated divorcee who has seen and done it all but still has joie de vivre and energy for a romantic adventure to the land of our dreams and anything that might develop. Photo, phone etc. London and S. East. Box 6911.

HELP! FORTYSOMETHING professional easy-going male seeks the company of thirty-something lady to help him enjoy the pleasures of life and stop him turning into boring old fart. Box 7011.

DEEPLY ROMANTIC Sussex bachelor (34, moderate smoker) with dry, sometimes surreal SoH seeks intelligent, sensitive lady. Age less important than your capacity for warmth, smiles and openness. Box 7111.

HAVE WIFE, won't travel. North West businessman 42 seeks female companion on regular business trips to Europe and USA. Age etc. less important than sensuous cuddles. Box 7211.

BLACKPOOL GUY 24, still(!) looking for girl with perverse/odd! sense of humour. Reply direct: PO Box 4, Poulton le Fylde, Lancs.

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"READY, WILLING and able." Attractive professional female, early 30s requires attractive, amusing city/country loving gent (30-45) with excellent soh to put some wind back in her sails! Photo/phone. Box 4610.

YOUR SMILE says it all! Tall professional married man, 50, seeks mature lady looking for a safe discreet sensual liaison. Liven up those long New Year days. South East. Box 3410.

BALDING BEER SWILLING professional 30, tall athletic build, football loving, and with a healthy interest in straight sex is now open to offers. Box 3510.

TALL MALE 43, good looking, intelligent, sense of humour, meditator, manager of brilliant band, seeks female to share unusual lifestyle, affection, love and laughs. North-west area. Box 3610.

I USED TO LIVE and work in southern France. Now I work in Slough. Can you convince an unattached male (late 20s) that he has done the right thing? Box 3710.

INTELLIGENT ARROGANT bastard needs house training. Are you woman enough to do the job? Box 3810.

MALE, 20, SEEKS n/s female, 18+. Photo please. N/West. Box 4010.

GRADUATE, STRONG, attractive 25 seeks Mrs Robinson for discreet uncomplicated liaison. London. Box 4110.

MALE SELF-EMPLOYED graduate, 34, friendly, honest, caring, loyal, healthy, talkative, humorous sometimes quiet. N/s, n/d, vegetarian. Enjoys visual arts, books, music, countryside, friends, much more. Seeks kind intelligent positive lady, 22-34, similar interests, to be friend, confidante, potential life-time partner. Derbyshire/East Midlands/further. ALA and photos returned. Box 4210.

PASSIONATE MALE 53, totally free but now shortsighted, well educated, well plumbed and normal hedonistic interests seeks similar lady 40+ wanting permanent relationship. Recent photo helps, humour definitely succeeds. Oxon/Bucks/Herts. Box 4310.

DOES NEW WOMAN wear stockings? If so, how about a 6'2", blue eyed, attractive, sporty, 33 year old professional New Man as your Christmas stocking filler. London South East. Interested? Box 4410.

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ATTRACTIVE FEMALE (34) caring, ticklish, educated, professional, seeks similar single, literate male for interesting conversations, off-beat films and big hugs. Box 1510.

UNEMPLOYED PROFESSIONAL man, 36, acts like, drinks like and looks similar to Keith Chegwin, wants to know if there's anyone out there interested. Box 1610.

HOLIDAY COMPANION. Caucasian executive, sixties. Would like to meet a much younger, very attractive, easy to get along with, n/s, companion of good background for all expenses paid overseas holiday by the sea. Photographs will be returned. Box 1710.

SULTRY WOMAN seeks real top gun stud, 20-40. Box 1910.

UNATTACHED MALE professional, 44, attractive (medium build) solvent, interests novels, jazz, claret, seeks arty, funny, "politically incorrect" female (London). Box 2010.

GORGEOUS GLASWEGIAN (independent, easy going and sociable to boot) seeks handsomish man 25-35. Must be sociable and sussed to share curries, dancing, boozin', Sundays. Box 2110.

BOHEMIAN BEAUTY (27) seeks unattached tall dark handsome "leading man" (20s-30s) for inevitable happy ending. Photo? Box 2210.

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Eye Love Reader

EDUCATED, SOLVENT, slim, discreet, personable male professional, assertive but considerate, seeks female counterpart under 45 (any nationality) for affectionate relationship. Photo appreciated. London telephone essential. Box 2310.

ELIGIBLE BACHELOR, 31, tall, strong, handsome, kind, wealthy and humorous seeks pretty blonde well-educated girlfriend, 18-24 (please send photo). London. Box 2410.

1992 HARD WORK? Break out of the rut in 1993. Solicitor 46 seeks lady preferably 30-40 to enjoy lunches out and discreet affair and maybe more. North London or Herts. Box 2510.

ROBIN HOOD SEEKS Maid Marion! Eligible, honest, intelligent swashbuckler, 34, desires stunning, bright, slim, amusing n/s lady, 24-32ish to share adventures. Own tree house and charger. Would I die for you? Please write and tell me why! Midlands/anywhere. Box 2610.

SINGLE WOMAN (22) looking for attractive intelligent exciting young (22-27) male for a lasting relationship — not necessarily serious! Lives in Edinburgh but able to travel. Box 2710.

HANDSOME HUMOROUS male seeks attractive, articulate lady with shapely Christmas stockings. South/Southwest. Box 2810.

BRIGHT, BLONDE/ brunette sought by handsome athletic gent (40) for fun relationship. South/Southwest. Box 2910.

VERY ATTRACTIVE Libran Lady, 30s, looking for a special man (tall, n/s, humorous, intelligent) to discover love and laughter with in 1993. Photo please. Box 4910.

MAN (29, LONDON/SOUTH) with a tape recorder up his nose seeks similar woman with view to achieving full stereo effect. Box 5010.

MALE LONDON based artist-businessman 40 attractive single seeks warm intelligent creative lady for travel and fun. Box 5110.

QUASIMODO seeks Esmerelda. Box 5210.

SENSUOUS SLIM sophisticated lady (30-42) with wit and humour sought by sincere separated sensitive successful London based professional man (43) once handsome, still passable. Nothing is lost by meeting for dinner! Total discretion guaranteed. Box 5310.

HANDSOME PRINCE 38 looking for attractive princess 25-35 to share life with n/s London area. Photo please. Box 5410.

CAMBRIDGE: SEEKING emotionally aware 40ish slim cultured intelligent cheerful centre/left local man into Unity. Me: a warm woman, 41, slim, dark-haired, beautiful smile. Box 5510.

SLIM REDHEAD, 35, playful in word and deed, seeks 35-45 yr-old male who is sardonic, kind, complicated and comfortable with himself. Send photo and/or self-portrait. Box 5610.

MISS, MS OR MRS X, as you are reading this ad, try it. The cost of a stamp could solve status of solo, solvent, professional male circa 1945. P/exchange facts and photo, for wining/dining/theatre-tea/coffee? Box 5710.

ATTRACTIVE PROFESSIONAL male 40 successful easy going nice looking funny gentle seeks slim attractive woman for sexy relaxed affectionate fun times. Not necessarily looking for commitment just enjoyment. Photo appreciated. London/South. Box 5810.

SINGLE, EDUCATED, presentable male, 37, seeks female for seriously needed laughs. Slightly infantile soh. Likes walking, Holland, drinking, motorcycles, French holidays. South Midlands(ish). Box 5910.

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FOUR SLIGHTLY MAD, bowel-shatteringly handsome Army subalterns with three months left to serve in the Caribbean, seek redress of hormone imbalance from similarly talented vivacious young ladies: We've had enough sun, sea and sand... Box 3611.

FORTY SOMETHING air ace hunk on leave from Gulf Jan/Feb needs intelligent thirty something hunkette for good food good drink and good laugh in Brighton area. Box 3711.

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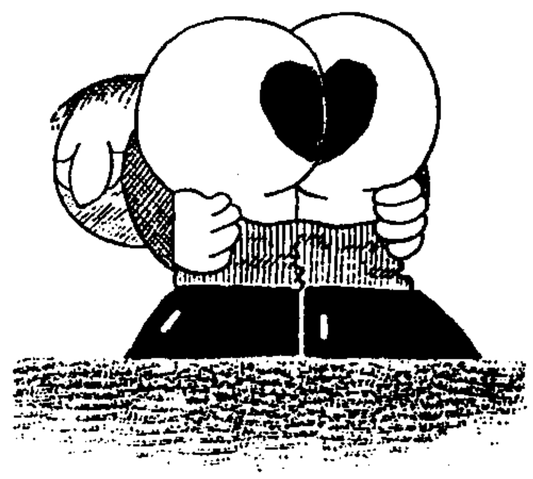

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MARRIED MAN, 40s, SOH, SW1, fit, slim, 5ft 10in, seeks woman for discreet liaison, who also knows wants, says needs, and shows feelings. Ring 0839 516804

HARD WORK equals no social life, hence this short cut. Striking petite brunette needs tolerant, humorous, devastatingly honest man, so go for it. Ring 0839 512916

PROFESSIONAL successful attractive man sought by lady with good looks and successful outlook on life, blonde, slim. Aged 35-50. NWest area. Ring 0839 516962

VERY BUSY ACTOR, 35, 5ft 11in, fair hair, slim. Seeks outgoing kind girl, for less busy evenings Chez Moi. Ring 0839 516106

ABANDON YOURSELF in arms of handsome, sophisticated man, wishing for exciting, adventurous liaison with gorgeous, elegant passionate lady, 20-40, daytime, London. Ring 0839 514351

ATTRACTIVE, YOUNG, male lawyer, (Cambridge graduate, if it helps ..), Mediterranean eyes/looks, seeks attractive, intelligent female for unforgettable moments. Ring 0839 512074

VERY ATTRACTIVE BLONDE female, enjoys eating out, cinema. Seeking honest, romantic, good looking man, with sense of humour, 30 to 40 year, preferably living in London area. Ring 0839 512128

WANTED, attractive fashionable man, 36-44, witty, intelligent, kind, for friendship, maybe romance. I am an attractive, slim, young 44, female. Ring 0839 513484

PETITE NURSE, 37, kind, vivacious, likes dancing, music, people, looking for friendship and/or romance with a nice man. Ring 0839 512133

INCURABLY ROMANTIC man, just 40, balanced outlook, well motivated, sincere and financially secure, seeks intelligent, caring woman, with a zest for life. Ring 0839 516259

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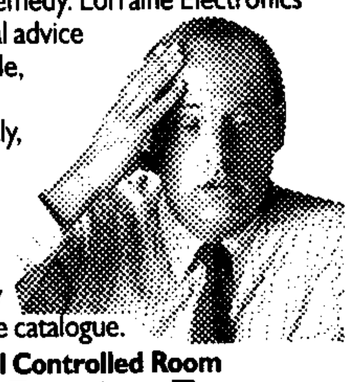

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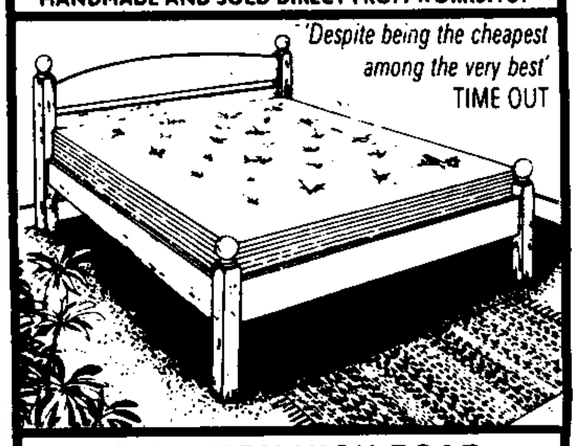

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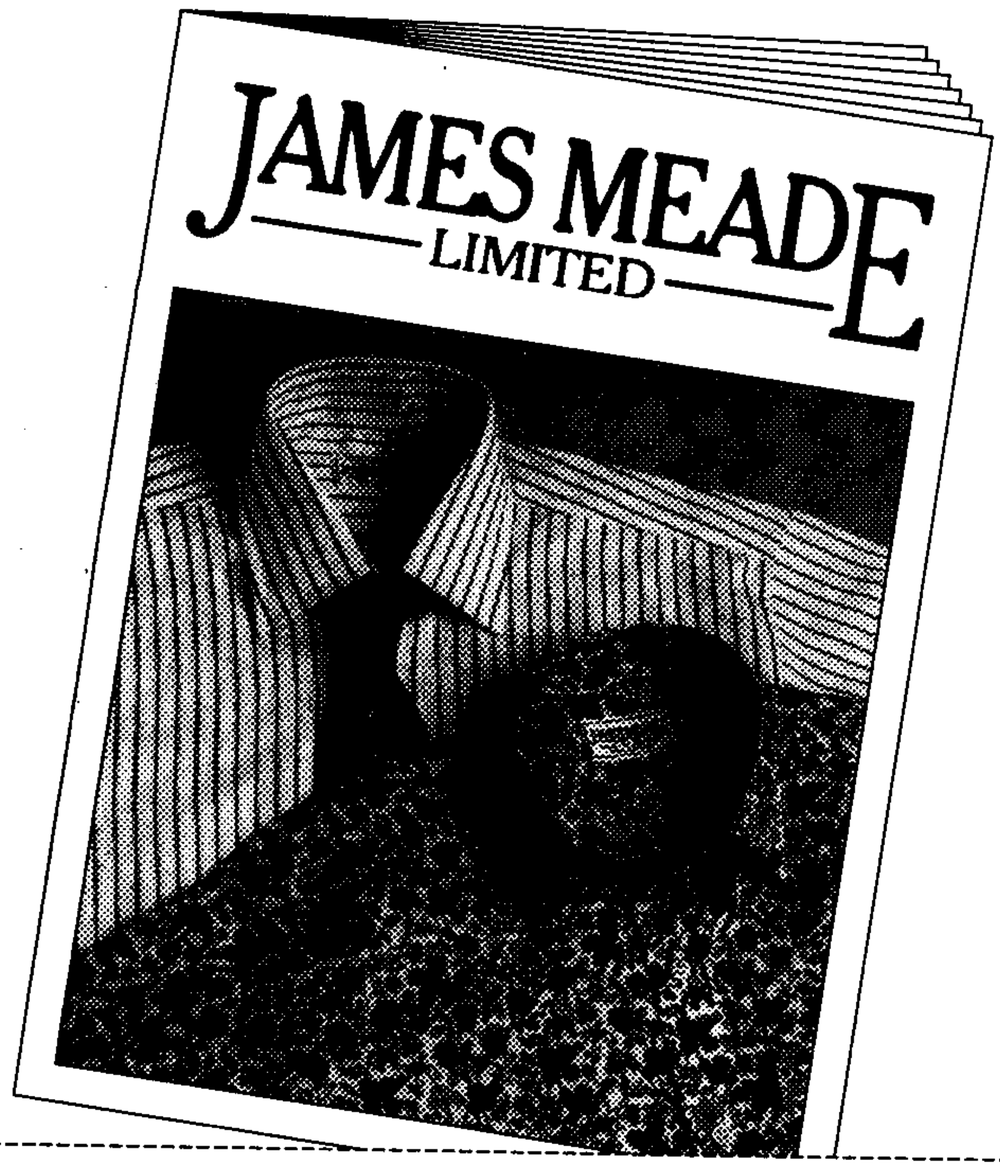

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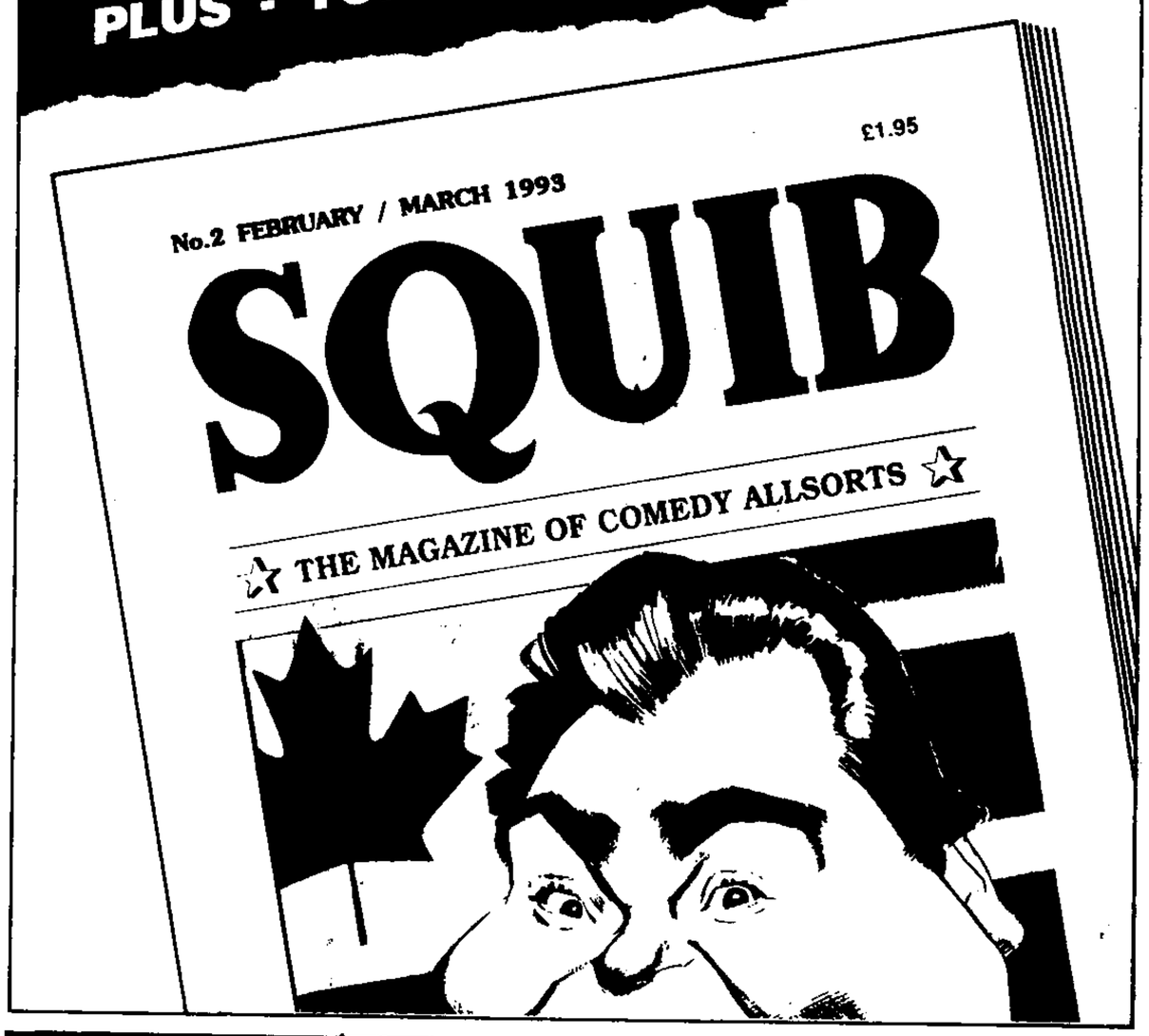

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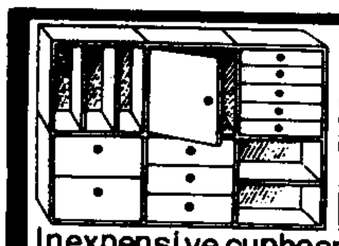

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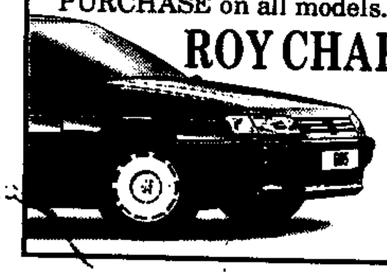

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